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April-June 1938

STORM OVER TUPELO *Charles G. Hamilton*

AMERICAN NEUTRALITY, 1938 *J. H. Flye*

W. H. AUDEN *James G. Southworth*

CRITICISM OF MEANING *Austin Warren*

GEORGE ELIOT *Blanche Colton Williams*

CARL VAN DOREN *Charles I. Glicksberg*

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FORCE never accomplished anything that was permanent. . . . I have not read history without observing that the greatest forces in the world and the only permanent forces are the moral forces.

WOODROW WILSON, 1916

Sewanee Review

APRIL-JUNE-1938

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The editor ironically congratulates the German terrorists for their brutal seizure of Austria and tries his hand at their kind of reasoning. Much of German propaganda, including radio broadcasts, is just as specious as this experiment in mockery is.

American Neutrality, 1938.....James Harold Flye 133

Father Flye, of the Anglican Order of the Holy Cross, surveys briefly the history of American policy of neutrality and plainly makes evident the reasons for a present revision of that policy in the light of current world-events.

Can Capitalism Survive?.....G. Ripley Cutler 147

Continuing his discussion from the last issue, Mr. Cutler (who is connected with Estabrook & Co., Boston, Mass.) scrutinizes the case against Capitalism, the enemies within the gates, Capitalism at the crossroads and makes some interesting proposals.

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In the next instalment, to appear in the July-September issue, she will relate the founding and history of Ruskin, Tennessee which was established to apply the economic principles of John Ruskin.

Storm Over Tupelo (poem).....Charles G. Hamilton 167

This vivid genre effort of President Roosevelt's trip to Tupelo, Mississippi, inaugurating the official use of T.V.A. power, accurately reveals a growing sentiment against technological invasion of the happy Southland. The satire is obvious.

Dirge (poem).....Joe Horrell 171

Isaiah the Prophet.....John R. Dallinger 172

The growing interest in the Bible as literature and its revelations of the roots of religious sentiment in western civilization make this essay of great timeliness. Incidentally, it discloses the significance of Isaiah and his influence upon the Hebraic mind for which modern civilization is greatly indebted. The effects of the Teutonic Terrorism are having repercussions in awakening curiosity and interest (out of revulsion to the inhuman and savage treatment of Jews in Germany and Austria) in the remains of ancient Hebrew culture and literature.

The author is Professor of Hebrew in St. Luke's Theological Seminary of the University of the South (Sewanee) and holds degrees from Harvard and the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge.

Wystan Hugh Auden.....James G. Southworth 189

Last November the King's Gold Medal in England was awarded to Auden, one of the most talked-of younger British poets. Mr. Southworth has contributed to this Quarterly articles on Stephen Spender and on C. Day Lewis.

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Although Dr. Warren's comment is really a book review its value consists in its excellent and ably original contribution to a literary problem of pressing importance.

LLL

Dr. Warren's growing reputation as critic and scholar gives great delight, since he made his debut in this Quarterly.

Dr. Warren is Associate Professor of English in Boston University, Boston, Mass.

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The series of critical essays on contemporary American critics which Dr. Glicksberg has contributed to this and other periodicals has established him as one of the sanest commentators in the present confusion of American criticism. In the next issue he will publish his comments on V. F. Calverton.

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Dr. DuBois continues his thwackings of American quarterlies in a well-intentioned effort to improve their readability, relenting somewhat from his negativisms of earlier efforts and is discovering discussable articles in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR and in THE VIRGINIA QUARTERLY REVIEW. The main drift of this quarter's discussion is the desirability of convictions.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH takes pleasure in announcing the successful completion of the First Summer Session of

The Sewanee French School

Thirty-eight students, representing fourteen Southern and Eastern States, were enrolled in the newly created school, which closed a six-weeks' term on July 28, 1937. The wide variation in the preparation of students for the courses offered is shown by the fact that the number included two undergraduates from Dartmouth College, nine M.A.'s, and three Ph.D.'s. Twelve enrolled as candidates for the degree of Master of Arts.



The 1938 Summer Session

Officers of THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH are encouraged by the success of the First Summer Session to continue THE SEWANEE FRENCH SCHOOL as a permanent feature. The Bulletin for the 1938 Summer Session is in process of preparation and will be available upon request.



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Sewanee, Tennessee

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APRIL-JUNE-1938

by the editor

ASIDES AND SOLILOQUIES

March 12, 1938.

HEIL Hitler! Down with war! Up with slaughter!

CONGRATULATIONS, dear Fury, on the completion of your life's ambition. You have gloriously seized Austria without resorting to war. If any slaughters occurred during the triumphal march you made into Vienna, you are obviously not responsible. Indeed, your defenders may say with more or less truth that there have been no slaughters at all. Everybody in Austria wanted you to come and save that nation from Jews, Communists, and Democrats. So far as I can see, your only sin was your reluctance: your hesitancy in doing what was plainly your duty. You have saved the German Nazis in Austria, even though they were numerically in the minority because you are a protector of minorities. You have elbowed Il Duce into the shadows and have become the Head Man in the pacification of Europe. You are the World's Savior.

DEAR Fury, you have still much work to do. Remember, that of the points you enumerated in *Mein Kampf* which you accepted as your program for the restitution of Germany, two chief jobs remain: (1) the recovery of German colonies and (2) the friendship with Great Britain. Your divine mission will be plain to you how you may now achieve both with one stroke. Build more battleships and more aeroplanes! Send them at once to every one of the colonies stolen from Germany and take them! England will then gladly, through Mr. Neville Chamberlain, admit you are the World's Savior and beg for your friendship. You will then be in a unique position to demonstrate tangibly your friendship with Great Britain. You may then proceed to pacify England by reducing it to a satrapy of the *Dritte Reich*.

OF course you want, at present, to recognize in words (at least) the freedom and independence of the British Empire. But can't you see how Communism, Democracy, and Judaism are, like syphilis, destroying the essentially Teutonic character of the Anglo-Saxons? The British Labor Party has, for this half century or more, kept up a constant propaganda to destroy the Germanic ideas of right government. Never forget that that bewhiskered Jew, Karl Marx, found asylum in the British Museum where he wrought that Devil's Hornbook, *Das Kapital*! Right now the British press is circulating lies about your achievements and ideology. It is wickedly and maliciously falsifying the glories of Nazi triumphs by printing everything those liars—their foreign correspondents—foolishly write. Down with Free Press! Simplify your magnificent sweep in saving the world from Bolshevism by bombing the House of Parliament: or better still, burn it. It would make a better spectacle than the burning of that atrocious Berlin Reichstag. Complete Guy Fawkes's work!

THE British are calling for you! Can you ignore the cries of the faithful in Great Britain? Why not pacify England, as you have pacified the Rhineland and Austria? What better move could you make to strangle Bolshevist France than to make Britain Nazi? Day by day, riots in England increase! Don't forget that a Machiavellian and wicked Jew named Benjamin Disraeli made

the British Empire. Undo his work as soon as you can to make your own work easier as savior of the world from Bolshevism. Until you do it, Great Britain will be your chief obstacle! Already, its Prime Minister (with the mind of a Great Chancellor of the Exchequer) is doing his best to build up armaments to present to you as a free gift in your work as Liberator destroying liberties. Remember the oppressed Germans in England: remember the Anglo-Saxons defeated by that Norman bastard in 1066 and all that! Remember the Germans who ruled England in the eighteenth century from George I to George IV. Remember Prince Albert! Remember Victoria the Good! If you haven't read Carlyle's *Past and Present*, read it and find out how desperately the British languish for a Hero! A Hero who comes out of the eternities, as you have: a man sent by God. Clean up England as Abbott Samson cleaned up St. Edmundsbury!

The Times call for a man. You are that man!

WHEN you have sent your armored cars, troops, and aeroplanes to save Britain from the laborites, you still have some more work to do. Here is the United States of America!

You would be surprised to know how many Germans, naturalized and unnatural, there are in the United States. Your embassies and your consulates have doubtlessly supplied you with that information. The cries of the oppressed in the United States increase with deafening roars. Everything is in your favor. Not a single German in the United States has any rights! When he wants to set up Nazi camps to foster American patriotism and provide a little calisthenics by raising the right arm, fists *unclinched*, he is cruelly suspected of all sorts of things which are not true. Actually (would you believe it?), one Nazi camp in Connecticut was prohibited with due process of law! Away with due process of law: in Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Florida, and Tennessee! Due process of law is a decadent survival of democracy.

YOU may count on us in the South to be quick to recognize the logic of Nazi ideology. For a long time, our own Nazi principles have worked grandly. We call it Lynch Law. Like Nazis, we execute criminals first and then have a trial. (You call it

a plebiscite!) We have our own Jews, only they are black-skinned. We have long since used to great advantage Nazi methods: We string 'em up. We're already apt pupils.

WE even have our magazines which are preparing the way for you: for instance, *The American Review*, which has diligently and profoundly elucidated the divine mission of the corporative and totalitarian state. *The Examiner* (published at Rye, New York) is another.

And pause to think of the shiploads of Jews and refugee German anti-Nazis we have in our midst! The Jews are ruining America! A number of years ago a Dearborn Michigan manufacturer of automobiles clearly called our attention to Jewish machinations in this country. And don't forget that Albert Einstein and other Jews of his ilk are in America ruining American mathematics and physics! And Thomas Mann—that renegade!—is lecturing here right now against your glorious rule!

YOUR glorious achievement in Austria, dear Fury, has converted even me! And I am a sample of thousands of Americans of long ancestry in this country who, admiring people who can do BIG THINGS in a BIG WAY, look to you to save us from that petty tyrant now in our White House who confiscates our property through his socialistic New Deal. We want you to give us a New Zeal! Only you, dear Fury, can give us it! Relieve us from thinking! Exercise us by a lot of marching! More throats cut! More machine-guns! Give us bull and the bullet!

HEIL Hitler!

by James Harold Flye

AMERICAN NEUTRALITY, 1938.

AMONG the many growing uncertainties which have beset the present writer with the passing of time, during which he has, it is to be hoped, learned some things but certainly had to unlearn a good many others that once seemed quite settled, has been what to laugh at. Perhaps one object of amusement is the person himself who raises such a question. "If you haven't a sense of humour," the present Bishop of London once said, "get down on your knees and pray for it." Possessing perhaps fairly quick and at times even a bit embarrassingly ebullient risibilities, the writer has felt that there were perhaps other things he needed more to pray for, yet has come to find that various subjects at which he once would have laughed now evoke sympathy and sadness instead of mirth. If cruelty, indifference to the suffering of another being, seems the greatest of sins, and compassion one of the noblest of attributes, then one feels glad at the development within him of the tenderness that is not stirred to laugh at what is really sad; but provided it is not at the expense of sensitiveness of sympathy, we would in a world like this surely wish as ready and keen a sense of mirth as possible. Sometimes, indeed, we may hover or even alternate between the two, things seeming funny or sad by turns.

What should be one's attitude, for example, towards such persons as for years now have been advocating (to quote the phrase used by one of their organizations) "an amendment to the United States Constitution making war illegal"? (The means being to require a national referendum before a declaration of war.) What effect would this have? Murder is illegal in the United States (where there are about twelve thousand murders a year) and the selling of liquor in Tennessee (where bootleggers are so thoroughly a recognized institution that a bill was introduced in the 1937 Legis-

lature to tax them, thus recognizing by one state law a business forbidden by another) and trespass and forcible occupation of another's property in all states of the Union, including regions where a court order to such occupants to leave is treated as a joke and such a situation tolerated by state and federal authorities. Making war illegal. Perhaps we might make poverty illegal. Perhaps, indeed, we shall before long. And perhaps that will end it . . . To make war illegal might give an added zest to it.

The phrase somehow struck my sense of humor. But should it? As one thinks of good, high-minded, deeply earnest people, anxious to see humanity saved from that species of hell-let-loose known as war, one may doubt and smile at the feasibility of some of the methods proposed but certainly will not consider the ideals and motives matter for amusement.

As a matter of fact, however, war is illegal now, though such illegality is not for a moment taken seriously. Article VI of the United States Constitution declares, "This Constitution and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof; and all treaties made, or which shall be made under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land." Now one such treaty, a part, then, of the supreme law of the land, signed at Paris August 27, 1928, and proclaimed a binding agreement at Washington July 24, 1929, reads, "The High Contracting Parties solemnly declare in the names of their respective peoples that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies and renounce it as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another. The High Contracting Parties agree that the settlement or solution of all disputes or conflicts of whatever nature or of whatever origin they may be which may arise among them shall never be sought except by pacific means."

The nations of the world signed this pact. Its value would seem to be that of a scrap of paper.

To be sure it was understood at the time that of course a nation if attacked might fight in self-defense without violating the treaty. But it does not appear that the treaty has served to deter from any kind of war. Italy signed it; and if Italy's war against Ethiopia

was a war of self-defence then it is difficult to see that words have any meaning.

Whether war is illegal or not may be irrelevant, but there is no doubt that to men of good will war is a sickening horror. Certainly in this country and throughout the English-speaking world and in many other lands there is full realization of this and the strongest desire not to become embroiled in such a dreadful thing. But if not, how avoid it? What might involve the United States in a war?

A quarrel might of course arise directly between us and some other nation, of a nature that could not or would not be settled by peaceful means. The responsibility for bringing this on—the part of the aggressor—might in that case be ours, as it seems to the writer was certainly the case in the Spanish-American war, or it might not. There is much less talk now, however, than in our earlier history of Expansion and Manifest Destiny, and a rather general feeling seems to prevail that we have enough domestic problems to keep us pretty well occupied, so that very little support would be given today to anything that looked like conquest or meddling. Note for example, our withdrawal from Nicaragua and Haiti. If the peace of the world were not menaced today by anything more formidable than aggression on the part of the United States the cobwebs would in all probability gather undisturbed for many a year over the closed doors of the Temple of Janus.

Nor does there appear any great likelihood of our being directly attacked. It does seem possible, indeed, that our interests in and connection with the Philippine Islands—the original acquisition of which seems to the writer open to serious question—may yet involve us in some conflict in the Far East. But such may not be the case, and aside from this it is not easy to think of a quarter in which a direct primary quarrel between the United States and any foreign nation is likely to arise.

But as to our getting drawn into a major war originating somewhere else, that is another story. A burnt child dreads the fire; and we know what it is to be scorched. The desire to prevent this from happening again has given rise to the present efforts to establish in advance a sure neutrality.

II.

It has always, indeed, been our wish and purpose as a nation not to get involved in European quarrels. The inhabitants of colonial America had their difficulties and hardships; but they had a freedom from many restrictions and burdens and national enmities which persons living in continental Europe or England could hardly escape. There were, to be sure, the Indians and the French to keep the English (and Scotch-Irish) colonists from going stale for lack of fighting, but after 1763 the French wars and in the East the worst of the Indian ones were over. Thomas Paine, in his widely-read pamphlet *Common Sense*, written in 1775 to urge the colonists to fight not as they had started to do with the aim of forcing the British government to concede them the right of self-taxation and a large measure of self-government but for independence from England altogether, declared that by keeping the connection with the mother country they would be continually embroiled in the national rivalries and struggles of European politics, whereas by forming an independent republic they would cut loose from these altogether and live at peace, unvexed by European turmoil. The War of Independence left the general feeling that politically at any rate we could go our own way in this self-contained and independent fashion. There followed, to be sure, the Critical Period, with a loose league between thirteen diverse, often squabbling republics, certain of them perilously near at times to war, with little sense of national unity, and the outlook dismal. However, the Federal Union was formed, and our present government began with the inauguration of George Washington as our first President, April 30, 1789.

It would have surprised most Americans had they been told of the degree to which their own government was to be concerned in events taking shape in Europe at that very time. While Washington was being inaugurated certain men from all over France were making their way to Versailles, and five days later, May 5th, the first scene in the French Revolution opened, the meeting for the first time in a hundred and seventy-five years of the Estates-General. Just as we were beginning our national life, with the expectation of going happily on our way unaffected by European politics, there was beginning to blow in France what, seeming at

first the delightful breath of Spring, became before long a fearful hurricane. Before the end of Washington's first administration, not only were Austria and Prussia in arms against France but in England, where sentiment, as in the United States, had at first been so largely optimistic and friendly towards the French Revolution, this attitude had changed to one of alarm and hostility, leading to a war which was to go on almost continuously for over twenty years.

This war, with causes purely European, was to vex the United States in one way or another till 1815. If anyone imagined that what happened in Europe now that we were independent could not affect us, he must have discovered before long that he had been egregiously mistaken. First it was the question of the attitude of the American government towards France. France, earnestly solicited, had formed an alliance with the American rebels and helped win their independence. Indeed, without this aid the struggle would hardly have succeeded. Now the French Revolutionists expected that the United States would help them, and great numbers of Americans favored doing this. Our government, however, did no such thing, and Washington in 1793 very wisely and properly issued a proclamation of strict neutrality. This was indeed to our interest, but it was also surely right. The claim that we were really bound to aid France as a return for her help in the War of American Independence was simply untenable. The aid given the American Revolutionists was given by the royalist government of France in the time of Louis XVI, the king who after the overthrow of his government had been put to death by those who were now asking the aid of the United States. The gratitude we owed was to the royalist government. To say that we owed it to the government of the French Revolution is like saying that we might repay a favor done us by the Tsar of Russia by now aiding the Soviets.

Deep resentment against England on account of interference with our trade with France and impressment of American sailors, a serious tension being slightly eased by the Jay Treaty in 1794; deep resentment against France culminating in 1798; renewed irritation and resentment against both; attempts by each of them during the course of the great struggle to cut off the other's sup-

plies by sea, with corresponding damage to neutral shipping; the Embargo Act of December, 1807, forbidding American vessels to leave their ports, to make sure they would not be captured; the repeal of this too drastic measure and the substitution of the Non-Intercourse Act of March, 1809; continued search and capture of American ships and the taking therefrom of men claimed as deserters from the British and French navies—this done by both, but naturally more by the British—and finally the bungling War of 1812; these things beset for the first generation of its existence the little nation that had hoped to live a transatlantic life free from the wars and turmoil of the Old World.

But after 1814 this hope was largely realized. To be sure, the century that followed was not marked by great wars—certainly not by long ones—in Europe, but such as took place, e.g. the Crimean, the Franco-Prussian, did not or could not involve the United States at all. The wars fought by the United States during that time, or even such as threatened to occur but did not, were because of disputes to which this government was an original party.

During the early years of the present century war was remote from the thoughts of most Americans. We had become one of the great powers of the world, had no designs of further conquest, and felt quite capable of taking care of ourselves if affronted or attacked, a thing which did not seem likely. That we should get drawn into any war of European origin seemed to most of our people hardly conceivable. Many, in fact, thought it unlikely that there would be another European war. The Hague Conferences, the provisions for arbitration, an apparently growing peace sentiment, the avoidance of war in the two Moroccan crises, the general progress of civilization, seemed to many good omens for an era of peace.

And then came the World War, with the United States in 1917 a participant.

Of our entrance into that war it is not proposed to speak here at length. We all know how to the great mass of the American public, not very much versed or even interested in European politics, the news of the outbreak of a major war came with a sort of stunned amazement. Was it true? Was it possible? Had central Europe gone mad? Had the German government taken leave of its senses? And then public opinion began swiftly to crystall-

ize. President Wilson issued a proclamation begging Americans to preserve strict neutrality even in thought, but they went right on thinking. Who wanted to try to hold himself neutral in thought where great issues, matters as he believed of right and justice, were involved? This public opinion as it crystallized was predominantly pro-ally. Whether correctly or not, whether with adequate information or not, the majority of Americans felt that the Allies were fighting on the side of right and justice, and that for Germany to win would be a disaster. Then came the question of the rights of neutrals on the sea and the use of submarines which could not capture a merchant ship but only sink it. We were not a bellicose people and the quarrel was none of our seeking, but by 1917 we were in the mood of Admiral Dewey when, provoked by the behavior of the German commander in Manila Bay in 1898, he gave the instructions, "And say to Admiral von Diedrichs that if he wants a fight he can have it now." So we went in, with ardor, with courage, with marvelous spirit, with high hopes, with much idealism.

III.

Perhaps the high qualities that characterized our people twenty years ago have not waned, but at the present time there is a decidedly cooler temper about war. A good deal of anti-war spirit is noticeable. It is felt that we are not going to be the aggressor against any nation. We will defend ourselves if attacked but we do not seem in much danger of that; so far, however, as concerns getting drawn into a conflict originating elsewhere there is a widely prevailing determination that this simply must not and shall not happen. In any war involving other nations the United States must in any case be neutral. Perhaps rather than neutrality this aim should be called non-participation. It is not primarily because we wish to be just or impartial to both sides; it gives little heed to possible questions of right or wrong in a conflict; it represents the desire above all for our own safety. Peace at all costs. One may call such an attitude praiseworthy or ignoble, feasible or impracticable; the point is that it exists, and is motivating proposals and action at the present time,—the resolve that, come what will, the United States is not going to get drawn into the quarrels and wars of other nations. What portion have we in Europe? "To your tents, O Israel! Now see to thine own house, David!"

Among the factors contributing to produce this attitude would be reckoned the following.

(1) For one thing a realization of the detestable intrinsic nature and rationale of war. Civilization, progress, and fineness of character foster in one the ideal of preserving, of building up, of kindness to fellow-beings; war means destruction, tearing down, ruthlessness. I am not speaking of military training, discipline, or certain aspects of military life and virtues manifested and fostered therein, but of war in its essence, the stark, deliberate destruction of property and of human lives, the tragic impoverishment, crippling, and brutalizing of national life by selecting the best of the young manhood in the warring nations and setting these men to maim and kill each other.

(2) There is the realization, furthermore, of the catastrophic quality of modern warfare. There have been times when a certain amount of restraint and of sportmanship have found place even in the cruel business of war. Such perhaps was rather anomalous, but there is much anomaly in life. This, however, is more or less giving way. What is the sense in trying to make war in as humane a way as possible? War isn't humane. Nations are probably going to bind themselves less and less by any quixotic code of chivalry. The main thing is to win, and nations with the temper of those of the modern world are simply not going to forego the use of means which though ruthless promise a chance of winning. We are learning the truth enunciated in such clear fashion by the realist General Wm. T. Sherman, "War is brutality, and you cannot refine it." Cathedrals and libraries and the lives of non-combatants are not going to be allowed to stand in the way of victory. The will is going to be to win at the cost of whatsoever destruction. It seems probable that pretty much any means likely to bring the enemy to terms will be made use of. Realizing this, acutely conscious of the fearful destructiveness of the World War, and knowing what a stage of technical efficiency the civilized peoples of the world have reached, we need only ordinary common sense to see what a major war would do to any nation involved.

Our generation does not need to be reminded of what war does to a nation's finances. I do not know what the World War cost the United States in money. A former Secretary of the Treasury put the figure at fifty-one billion dollars. Our national debt rose

in less than two years from a billion and three quarters to twenty-eight billion. We were in the war for less than half its total duration and were not so hard hit as some other nations, but twenty-eight billion dollars is a staggering sum—a great deal more than the total amount of monetary gold and silver in the world. What would another war do to us?

(3) Another factor is disillusionment and cynicism about the World War. It is quite common now to hear people deplore our having entered the war at all. We could and should have stayed out, they say, and it would have been vastly better had we done so. What were we fighting for? Freedom of the seas? To establish the principle that our rights as a neutral and the lives of our citizens must be respected even by belligerents in time of war? Well, is that established now? For freedom, and to make the world safe for Democracy? A noble cause, but was it advanced any by the results of the war? What seems to be the condition or indeed the prospect for freedom and Democracy in the world today? To establish a condition where the battle-flags are furled in a Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World? A war to end war? No, it didn't do that.

What did we gain to offset our great losses? Even loans made to the Allies for war or rehabilitation purposes (though at the time it was felt by many and said in Congress that in such a cause we could well afford to make them even if it were a gift instead of a loan) have, to the great indignation and surprise of some Americans, not been paid.

The outcome in 1918 was supposed to be victory for the Allies and the United States against the Central Powers. But what did we gain?

Of course we may say what did anyone gain? One recalls the story of Bishop Gailor, who on being asked, "Bishop, who would you say won the war?" replied, "Who won the San Francisco earthquake?"

(4) Another factor in the present attitude is the belief that it is pretty clear what caused the United States to get into the war, notably loans to the Allies and insistence on rights of shipping and travel in war time; that by different acts and attitude on our part we could have avoided getting drawn in; and that in the light of

this experience it will be quite possible for us by planning in advance to avoid getting similarly involved again.

To the writer a good deal of this assurance seems rather superficial and facile, the product of inadequate apprehension, or, to put it plainly, ignorance. But it is one of the fundamentals of democracy that the ignorant are entitled to their opinions.

(5) Then there is the apprehensive feeling that another European war is quite possible at almost any time. To be sure, some of the positive predictions constantly issued during the last six or seven years to the effect that within a few months Europe would be ablaze with war may remind one a bit of the scout Publius Cossidius with his breathless report that the enemy were close at hand, on whom Caesar drily comments that being thoroughly frightened (*perterritus*), he had reported as an observed fact what he really had not seen at all. Nevertheless it is hard to see how a situation with dictators glorifying war and conquest, militarizing their whole people from primary school children up, and fomenting a fierce aggressive nationalism; with hatreds old and new burning steadily; with the nations generally expending huge sums on armaments; and with as sober a country as Great Britain planning to provide its entire civilian population with gas-masks—how such a situation even if perhaps not critical at the moment can be described as anything else than grave. He would be a sanguine optimist indeed who had no apprehensions of a coming war.

IV.

Such considerations as these have caused wide realization in the United States that there exists a situation of some concern to us. What shall or can we do?

If the idea is for the United States by all means not to get involved in any war of foreign origin, then the points to be considered are (1) is such non-participation possible? (2) If so, by what means may it be assured? There is a deeper question, which to some perhaps would sound foolish, or rather quaint: that is, would such non-participation be right? A word as to this later.

Perhaps no one can be sure in advance that the United States would not in certain cases find it impossible to avoid getting drawn into a war to which we were not an original party. But assuming

that it is possible to maintain the status of a non-participant, some of the means now proposed are

(1) No loans or credits to any warring nation; not only because these might turn out to be bad debts, but because one has a special interest in those to whom one has loaned money and this would work against neutrality.

(2) Americans forbidden to travel in the ships of belligerent nations, or at any rate warned that they do so entirely at their own risk with no protection from their government.

(3) No selling of munitions or supplies of war to belligerents of either side.

(4) No delivery by American ships of any goods whatever to belligerents. Any nation buying goods to have the full responsibility of transporting them away from the United States. A strict policy of Cash and Carry.

(5) Abandonment by this country of any claim to freedom of the seas in war time. Any American vessels going through what might be designated by belligerents as prohibited areas to do so entirely at their own risk, with no protection from their government.

Some of these, to be sure, notably the third proposition—no selling of supplies of war to belligerents—present rather serious difficulties. What, for example, are supplies of war? Metals? Oil? Chemicals? Clothing? Cotton? Foodstuffs? Various kinds of manufactured goods? One would say so, certainly. Indispensable to the prosecution of any war. Or, on the other hand, they are not distinctively supplies of war. And would a nation which in times of peace had been purchasing such things from the United States and which in war would face ruin without them submit to our refusing to continue to sell them?

What rights would we be prepared to maintain if any? Maintenance of them if they were disputed would certainly have to be by force. Look at Ethiopia.

It is of course conceivable that the United States might sometime get into war directly. A century ago we could perhaps have maintained ourselves on our own resources if isolated, but not now. There are some twenty substances practically necessary in modern civilization which the United States produces either insufficiently or not at all, as for example rubber, nickel, platinum. Would

we either in peace or in war time submit to having our source of supply of such things deliberately cut off?

Another question is, should some discretionary latitude be allowed (and this would mean normally to the President) as to dealing with a particular situation, or should the procedure be entirely mandatory, so that a program such as that outlined above would automatically go into effect?

There are those who believe that such a course would keep us from being drawn into a foreign war. If only we had acted in this sensible fashion when the World War broke out, they say, we could have stayed neutral, and how infinitely better that would have been. This is indeed arguable, but is it anything like certain? Is this or is anything the sure means to avoid participation in a war which may break out? Could we, or indeed should we have stayed out of the World War?

What is intended here is really to raise rather than to dogmatize upon this question. It might be interesting to see what an accurate poll in this country at the present time would show as to public opinion on this subject: could or should the United States have remained neutral in the World War? Many intelligent persons, I have little idea of the percentage, would undoubtedly answer yes to both queries. Perhaps yes is the answer of wisdom. But in many quarters where one hears it unhesitatingly given today it sounds like the answer of superficiality. It was certainly a very bad thing for us to get into the World War. But would it by any chance have been a worse thing for us not to have gone in? The realization of the two sides of such a question would seem to be necessary for any intelligent conclusion or consideration. What would have happened to the world in general and to us if we had been neutral throughout? A well-known English pacifist for whom I have personally great admiration and respect, speaking not long ago in Chattanooga, expressed the opinion that it was most unfortunate the United States came in. We meant well, but if we had not entered, the war would have ended sooner and the Allies would not have been able to impose a victor's peace on Germany, which would have been vastly better. Perhaps so. On the other hand, suppose in that case Prussianism, self-justified and rampant, had imposed a victor's peace on Great Britain and France? One may

well wonder what sort of world we would in such case be living in now.

The issue of war brings to a people of fundamental good will as to an individual of fundamental good will the fearful alternative of a choice of evils, either of them grievous. War is a horrible thing. Consider an individual, for example, a man brave, gentle, humane, distressed at the thought of inflicting suffering, feeling perhaps like Plato's good man that he would rather suffer injustice than inflict it. Now if war comes, the following are the possibilities. (1) Such a man may serve in the war, taking part in a barbarity against which his soul cries out in an agony of loathing; or he may refuse to serve, in which case either (2) his country to which he owes so much will be partially saved (much will have been destroyed in war) by others who fought when he did not, and he will have the shame of benefiting by their sacrifice; or (3) the enemy, willing to fight even if he is not, will triumph by the use of that very brutality which he loathes. A choice of grievous evils. So a nation may have to decide whether war is or is not the worse of two bad things.

And what if it is felt that there is involved not merely safety or expediency but an issue of right or wrong? True, one may be mistaken. Or it might be felt in regard to a major war that neither side was entitled to approbation. That is the view of many persons, for example, in regard to the present civil war in Spain. It was expressed succinctly in 1936 by Miguel Unamuno, when being asked in the course of an interview, "Which side do you approve of in the Civil War?" he replied, "Neither." "Well, which do you most disapprove of?" "Whichever wins, for that will most need curbing." If we felt like that, we most certainly should make every effort to avoid getting implicated in any way.

But what if there does seem to be an issue of right or wrong? Surely there have been such in the world's history. Could we say that it makes no difference what nations fight, or which side wins, or that even if it makes a difference we will do nothing? that our only concern is that our own country shall not become involved? This may be the wise and right course. Perhaps if we can keep out we should at any cost. On the other hand, it might be found that even the gains we had counted on by non-participation could not be realized; or possibly there might even apply that

shrivelling question, "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

And to recur to a query expressed at the beginning of this paper. The idea of binding ourselves irrevocably now as to what we will do or not do in case of any future war; a sort of national pacifist pledge not to fight, whatever happens; like a man, fearing his own weakness, taking an unconditional temperance pledge before setting out on a road where he will have to pass a saloon: is this humorous or not? What shall one say?

Author's Note—This paper was written in March, 1937, and read before the E. Q. B. Club of Sewanee. On one point it might seem at first a little out of date, since the principles referred to as merely proposals to secure American neutrality were in 1937 enacted by Congress into law. But on the other hand our Government, apparently regarding the application of this law as unwise, has thus far neatly nullified it. The law makes a certain course mandatory for this nation "whenever the President shall find that there exists a state of war between or among two or more foreign nations." But thus far President Roosevelt—like Nelson on a celebrated occasion putting the telescope to his blind eye and not seeing the signal to withdraw—has not found that a state of war exists between China and Japan, so our neutrality programme does not apply. On this principle the man who had sworn not to enter a saloon could consistently with his oath go into one provided no sign bearing the word "Saloon" were displayed, or by refusing to look at it. This is not said in criticism of the President, whose course of action in this matter may have been very wise, but merely to point out how laws can be evaded by governments as well as by individuals. If the Ludlow Amendment, requiring a national referendum before declaration of war, had been in effect in Italy or Japan it would not have made any difference at all with what happened in regard to Ethiopia or China. If nations are forbidden to declare war they can simply make war without declaring it; and by not calling it war they can claim that they have not violated the Peace Pact of August, 1928.

by G. Ripley Cutler

CAN CAPITALISM SURVIVE?¹

THE CASE AGAINST CAPITALISM.

THE classic case against Capitalism—the Marxist case—begins with an analysis of facts and ends with a prediction of revolution. Some of the factual analysis is solid and well-founded; some of the theory approaches theology in its dogmatism. Let us scrutinize for a moment this curious amalgam.

Aside from the famous and none too comprehensible theory of surplus value, the foundation of the Marxist or socialist attack on Capitalism lies in the doctrine that competitive production is never more than a transitory régime that leads inevitably to monopoly. Free competition is ruthless competition; it involves the elimination of the weakest and the survival of the strongest. After a relatively brief period of such competition, each field of industry will be left in the possession of either a single entrepreneur (a régime of monopoly) or of a few producers of more or less equal strength. Where competition has left several survivors, rather than a single one, the rival groups will be prompt to recognize the advantages for themselves of combination rather than a continuation of suicidal competition, and will establish *de facto* monopolies through cartels, holding companies, or trade associations. Thus in practically every field of business except, perhaps, agriculture, monopolies will eventually be set up which will concentrate within their hands all the available means of production. The monopolists will oppress the rest of the population, through high prices and low wages, until finally conditions become unbearable. At that time they will fall from their own weight like ripe fruit; being relatively few in number they will be easily abolished or expropriated and their properties turned over to the socialist State. Capitalism, in short, is a self-defeating mechanism which digs its own grave as it operates.

¹Continued from the January-March 1938 issue.

The Marxist charge that competition breeds monopoly is evidently subject to qualification. The business history of the past fifty years would seem to show that the trend toward monopoly in industry is far from uniform, but depends upon a variety of factors such as the amount of fixed capital required to operate economically, the nature of the product, and the nature of the market. An industry such as electric power, monopolistic in its essence, stands at the opposite pole from agriculture; and even in allied fields of trade one finds such differences as exist between the business of repairing shoes, the business of making shoes, and the business of making shoe machinery. In the United States the full authority of government has not been able to achieve a common policy for the cotton textile industry, nor to prevent it in the steel industry. On the whole it seems safe to say that the tendency toward monopoly in business has increased during the past twenty years with the progress of science and engineering. It is certain, at least, that in the modern state the government is increasingly concerned with regulating the operations and preventing the abuses of monopoly in business.

Generally speaking, however, the state of economic slavery prophesied by the Marxists has not been realized. Standards of living have increased in many countries. Large areas of the business field remain subject to competition. Social legislation has made enormous strides and government regulation of business has been increasingly effective. The proletarian revolution has occurred only in the country where there was no proletariat.

The doctrine that Capitalism sows the seeds of its own destruction may be approached from another angle. This second line of reasoning also proceeds from the basic assumption that competition engenders monopolies. The argument is then advanced that monopolies in business lead to imperialism in politics. A powerful trust or cartel, which sells its product at high prices in a protected market, is inevitably led to seek the enlargement of that market through the acquisition of colonies. Concern for raw materials may also play an important part in the desire for colonies. A business enterprise in itself, of course, is nowadays rarely in a position to annex territories and govern an empire, although there is abundant historical precedent for the government of colonies

by corporations. Today a business enterprise cannot make war, but the critics of Capitalism claim that a powerful monopoly through its control of press and politicians can easily provoke one. In fact, it is a fundamental dogma of the Marxists that the whole drama of politics is nothing but a puppet-show where statesmen may dance, but business pulls the strings.

Thus the natural desire of business monopolies for wider spheres of domination will push the capitalist countries into a scramble for territories, the conflict of rival imperialisms will lead inevitably to a world war and a world war will destroy bourgeois civilization itself. So runs the prophecy. No student of history could say that it is lacking in plausibility. About the only comment that can be suggested is that so far things have not happened in that way. We have had imperial rivalries and colonial wars, we have even had a world war; Capitalism in Western Europe has been severely shaken, and many of its institutions modified. Yet in those countries where it was firmly established, the system still stands substantially intact.

From every communist soap-box we have become accustomed to hearing that Capitalism leads to the oppression of the masses and therefore must fail, or that Capitalism breeds cruel and unjust wars and therefore must fail. To these familiar indictments a third has been added, which in recent years and particularly since the depression has fortified itself with impressive statistical support. This third indictment charges that Capitalism *as a system of distribution* is demonstrably inefficient and therefore has already failed.

Certainly there must be something wrong somewhere with the Capitalist system or it would not act as it does. For several years the machine seems to run smoothly; then it begins to hit on only a few cylinders. Stocks crash, credit is contracted, prices fall, and a depression is under way. Factory output drops by a third or even by a half, wages are cut, employees are dismissed in droves. Finally the banks begin to fail. Thousands starve in the cities, while farmers lose their farms because they cannot find a market for their crops. If anyone wishes to call that efficiency, let him come forward and have his temperature taken.

What is the cause of all this? The cause, say the modern critics,

is that Capitalism, with its allied institution private property, has brought about a distribution of income *so unequal* that the income of ultimate consumers is insufficient to absorb the full capacity of the industrial plant. There appears to be a paradox here, since from an economic standpoint the national income *is* (and therefore must equal) the annual product of the national business equipment. But wait a minute. Suppose that in the United States, in a given year, the national income is eighty billion dollars—much more than it has been in any recent year. If that income is distributed about as it is was in 1929, sixty per cent of all the families^a will receive less than two thousand dollars each. This large group as a whole will receive less than twenty-five per cent of the national income. Eight per cent of the families will receive over five thousand dollars a year; this small group will receive over forty per cent of the national income. The majority of families will receive much less than they need or would be willing to spend on necessities and minor luxuries; while a few families will receive more than they could possibly spend on anything whatever. Consequently they will save. The rich^a save about two-thirds of all the money that is saved. In a year such as 1929 the amount saved by the rich may have aggregated \$10,000,000,000. Since the demand by business for new productive capital in 1929 was nowhere near equal to the amount of new capital saved, the excess could only serve (as it had been doing for several years) to inflate still further the already swollen values of stocks and real estate. In other words, over-saving by people who have nothing else to do with their money may lead, and did in 1929 lead, to over-speculation and finally to financial panic. Whereas, had the distribution of wealth been less unequal,—had the excess savings of perhaps as much as \$10,000,000,000 in 1929 been distributed among the sixteen million families with incomes below two thousand dollars—these families would undoubtedly have spent the money and thereby contributed to the effective demand for goods.

The idea that such a thing as over-saving is possible will doubtless seem anathema to people brought up to believe in the unique virtue of thrift. One can only remind such people that what seems

^aSee Brookings Institution: *op. cit.*

^aFamilies with incomes in excess of \$10,000 a year.

advantageous to the individual may not always prove advantageous to the nation. And in the last analysis the question whether over-saving followed by over-speculation is the correct explanation of industrial crises does not affect the validity of the case against Capitalism. The fact that the system has built up a plant capable of giving comfort to all, but that instead of abundance it has yielded misery to most, is an indictment that is sufficiently damning.

V. ENEMIES WITHIN THE GATES.

The tradition taught in American schools is a tradition of freedom. Americans have been brought up to believe in personal liberty, freedom of speech and thought, a free press. Rightly or wrongly, Americans believe that individual responsibility in economic affairs—the ability to work when and as one chooses—is closely allied to individual liberty in political affairs. They cannot believe that there will be much left of personal liberty in a regimented economy.

Liberals, in short, are bound to believe that despite its failures there are values in Capitalism worth saving. There are spiritual values in *laissez faire* when *laissez faire* means letting people express themselves in accordance with their own bent. Imagine a State planning-board trying to make Thomas Edison into a tap dancer or Walt Whitman into a certified public accountant!

The possibility may be worth considering that where Capitalism has failed it has failed largely because it was false to its own nature and traditions.

Certainly the alliance between Capitalism and a belligerent nationalism—an alliance over which the Marxists gloat—can not be regarded as other than unnatural. Capitalism, so its supporters say, stands for liberty in economics in the same manner that democracy stands for liberty in politics. If this be true, a truculent vainglorious Capitalism, believing nothing but good of itself and evil of everyone else, is false to its own birthright. The real interests of Capitalism, as we have already seen, are overwhelmingly on the side of peace. The liberal economy, which seeks to promote trade among nations, is necessarily pacific. Wide markets, free markets, stable markets—these are the conditions under which Capitalism can produce abundance.

Yet in all countries who has not seen business men in the front rank of those who oppose peaceful policies and who advocate punitive expeditions, big navies, embargoes on imports and the exclusion of aliens? The attitude of most business men (except exporters) towards the tariff is characteristic of the way in which Capitalism, particularly since the great war, has tried to cut off not only its own nose but one might almost say its own head. It is quite permissible that opinions should differ as to the merits of a moderate dose of protectionism in a national fiscal policy. When tariff rates become so high that no goods can pass the barrier, however, it is time to state in forcible terms the true doctrine of Capitalism,—that prosperity depends upon, and actually consists of, the widest possible exchange of goods. By no stretch of the imagination can tariff rates which actually destroy markets be regarded as a contribution to economic progress.

It is fair to remember that capitalists are not the only class of people susceptible to the influences of a narrow and intolerant nationalism. The principal circulation of the Hearst papers is not in Wall Street. When it comes to hating the foreigner, white-collar workers and manual laborers can hate just as much as a railroad president. It is precisely for this reason that the causal relationship traced by the Marxists between the Capitalist State and wars of conquest seems open to question. The desire for empire may be rooted in greed, but surely it is also based on non-economic factors, factors that are totally non-rational or even anti-rational. One has only to recall the wave of emotional exaltation that always seems to accompany the approach of war. It can be compared only to a national psychosis. Imperialism, therefore, seems to be the creation, not so much of the masters of the national wealth as of the masters of the national psychology. They are not necessarily the same people. Kipling was not in the employ of Royal Dutch.

This article does not place the onus of fostering a vicious, intolerant nationalism on the shoulders of business men. It places the chief responsibility where it belongs, on the shoulders of yellow journalism and self-seeking politicians. The failure of business leaders has been that when fear and hate have begun to sweep the country, they have not sought to combat the trend, but have followed along with the procession. Business men who are supposed

to understand foreign affairs have made no concerted effort to keep public opinion correctly informed on international problems. There is an unending job of debunking to be done, if Capitalism is to survive.

What about the inequalities of distribution under Capitalism—inequalities which many believe are largely responsible for the whole disastrous round of boom, crisis, and depression? To what extent are business men responsible for these inequalities and what can business men do to counteract them? In so far as the unequal distribution of wealth results from the institution of private property and the right of inheritance, the problem is obviously beyond the scope of any single class of the population to settle. What rights private property should enjoy, constitutes a social problem, which society as a whole, acting through its organism the state, alone is competent to solve. The institution of private property, deeply rooted in the Roman and feudal law, long antedates the industrial revolution; Capitalism did not create it. If property rights are to endure, however, it is up to the possessing classes to see that these rights do not become an intolerable burden on the dispossessed. As a matter of enlightened self-interest, business men will be well advised not to forget the social functions of property, and to regard large accumulations of wealth as a public trust for which they are temporarily responsible.

The State may also decide to take direct action towards correcting existing inequalities in wealth, by levying money from certain groups of citizens and giving it to others. The money is usually raised by the income tax; the redistribution effected by schemes of social insurance. Whether the State should undertake to provide old-age insurance, health insurance, accident insurance, and unemployment insurance to its citizens with or without cost, involves a series of inter-related problems which must be answered, not by Chambers of Commerce, but by Society as a whole.

The real responsibility of business leaders for the mal-distribution of wealth under Capitalism lies in the stubbornness with which they have sometimes clung to a policy of low wages and high prices. One must recognize honorable exceptions to this charge. Some capitalists have voluntarily chosen to pay wages higher than the market price; a number of industries have benefited society and themselves alike by constantly endeavoring to sell a better product

at a lower cost. It has been a general practice of business men, however, to pay as low wages as possible and to try to peg prices at levels higher than competitive conditions would justify.

Of these two offenses the latter⁴ is probably the more serious. One might at first sight suppose that the one certain contribution that every employer could make towards a better distribution of wealth would be to raise the wages of all his employees. As a matter of fact, however, no individual employer is free to determine the rate of wages he can pay. If by chance he is making large profits, he can obviously pay higher wages instead of higher dividends. If on the other hand he is only doing a little better than break even, he will be forced out of business if he pays higher wages, in which case his employees will lose even such pay as they have been getting. The general level of wages is established by competitive conditions, custom, and legislation. These forces are nation-wide in scope; they cannot be controlled by any group of individuals, however powerful. A general rise in wage rates, placing increased purchasing power in the hands of those who need it most, may possibly be the ideal method of equalizing the distribution of income. Such a rise, however, can be expected to occur only over a long period of time, as the slow pressure of labor unions for better working conditions and higher pay is reenforced by an enlightened public opinion.

On the other hand, individual business men and corporations are often directly responsible for the policy of producing a limited output of goods to be sold at high prices. And are not prices fixed by competitive conditions as well as wages? Are they not determined by supply and demand? The answer is that in industries where effective competition prevails prices are indeed fixed by supply and demand. We have already seen, however, that in the business world of today an increasing number of fields are controlled by open or concealed monopolies. As every student of economics knows, the fixing of prices under a régime of monopoly is something entirely different from competition in a free market. A monopoly, of course, cannot in any way predetermine what the demand for its product will turn out to be at various price levels.

⁴See *Income and Economic Progress*, a publication of the Brookings Institution.

As soon as it has tested out the market, however, nothing can prevent it from establishing the price at that level which promises to show the largest net return. A monopoly, moreover, is not subject to the mental stimulus that intelligent competition often affords. The corporate policy adopted by a monopoly is apt to be a drifting, do-nothing policy, lacking in flexibility, unwilling to admit that conditions may alter or to make adaptations when they have altered. The price once established by a monopoly stands a good chance of lasting without change for years or even for decades. Examples of monopoly prices in the United States may be found, here and there, in high rates^{*} for domestic consumption of electricity, still eight cents or more a kilowatt-hour in various localities; the high rates for passenger travel on the railroads in force till recently; and the price of steel rails.

How will the general adoption by industry of a policy of selling the largest possible amount of goods at the lowest possible price help to correct the unequal distribution of income which we have asserted to be the basic, possibly the fatal, weakness of Capitalism? The answer is that under a régime of competitive prices, while money wages may not be increased, real wages (ability to buy goods and services) will be increased. The less a workman and his family have to spend on electric and telephone rates, mortgage interest, doctors' bills, railroad fare and the like, the more will they be able to spend on better food, better clothing, and better housing. The power companies may claim that the benefit of reducing an electric-light bill by fifty cents or one dollar a month is negligible, yet who can estimate the cumulative effect of a hundred small price reductions? The fact remains that the rise in the standard of living over the past one hundred and fifty years—what the speakers at the Chamber of Commerce luncheons refer to as "progress"—consists largely of the price reductions that have taken place during the period.

VI. CAPITALISM AT THE CROSSROADS.

Men of affairs frequently complain of too much government interference in business and sigh for the return of the "good old days", presumably of McKinley, Harding, and Coolidge. This

^{*}Today such rates are the exception rather than the rule.

hope is vain. It is certain that business leadership will never again be permitted, as in 1929, without let or hindrance to drive the economic machine over a steep place into the sea.

During the past five or six years the American government has assumed a definite responsibility for the successful functioning of the economic system. In the words of President Hoover, "The time has gone by when a depression could be regarded only as a depression of business. It must be regarded now as something deeper, involving a social responsibility, not merely for measures helpful to the restoration of business, for fundamentally they are actions in behalf of those whom business has ceased to be able to employ". In other words, the State is going to see that business provides enough jobs to go around; if not, the State will make jobs of its own.

The adoption of this doctrine, enunciated under a Republican administration and somewhat broadened under the Roosevelt régime, must be regarded as little short of revolutionary. Nothing of the sort was ever done or thought of in previous depressions. In 1873, 1893, 1907, the Government's efforts to remedy economic conditions were limited to mild measures of coöperation between the Secretary of the Treasury and the New York banks. During the recent depression the Government, acting through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, loaned billions of its own money to save tottering banks, railroads, and insurance companies from bankruptcy. Through other agencies the Government loaned other billions to farmers and home owners to save them from losing their property at foreclosure. The Government spent billions in public works to make jobs; and finally assumed the responsibility, either through jobs or through a dole, of providing for all the unemployed.

It is idle to suppose that the invalidation of certain New Deal measures by the Supreme Court presages a return to "normalcy". So long as the Government of the United States is responsive to the will of the majority, any recurrence of depressed business will mean a recurrence of government interference. Supreme Court or no Supreme Court, the people will not forget that the Government took care of them in 1932 and 1933. Moreover, it is logical to suppose that in the next depression the government's control over private industry will be stiffened, possibly made permanent. In response to popular demand the Government may find itself

obliged to take over the entire management of business—in other words, to dictate production, fix prices, and establish wages. Such a development is conceivable within the next ten years.

The moral of all this is that unless business leaders can agree to work for policies tending to achieve and perpetuate business stability, the end of the era of private initiative is probably in sight. We have discussed in preceding sections what these policies are. They can be summarized in a few words: peace, free markets, low prices, and a wide distribution of the national income. These policies are not something foreign to the nature of Capitalism; on the contrary they are its native element. At present there is no law except the law of self-preservation compelling business men to support them. Those who do not, however, may be reminded that they are working for their own abolition.

by Joe Horrell

FOR AN AGRARIAN, SMILING

The mind's portico is dusty and its fence
ambles over the rutted hill and gullied:
charge windmills of smoke and with the violence
of poetry keep the weary land unsullied.

The antique music of relics marls the dusty
patches while the bitter hollyhocks demurely
forbid the implements from getting rusty:
oh they will keep them bright and shining, surely.

When earthen songs were precipitate in the soil
the textured loam slipped through the hand, no stones:
oh let us prefer to portentuous turmoil
the white magnolias and grey Confederate bones.

by Grace Stone

TENNESSEE:

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LABORATORY

II. NEW COLONIZATION POLICY AFTER THE WAR.

In the late 'sixties the Tennessee Commissioner of Immigration, feeling that the results of his first campaign to advance the State's interests were not as far-reaching as they should have been, mapped out a new program. Believing that it was "high time for Tennessee to take her place by the side of the North as far as the developments of her resources were concerned",²⁴ Bokum ordered compiled an extensive survey of the mineral wealth, water power, timber, arable lands, fruits, and grazing facilities of the state and proceeded to publish it in northern cities and particularly in England and Germany. "The General Assembly of the State, faithful to the spirit of the new era upon which they entered after the rebellion",²⁵ took measures to secure the benefits which the influx of more capital and intelligent labor of the North and of Europe would bring. "Before the war, the importance attached to raising of cotton, and the obtaining of cheap food for her slaves, made Tennessee take a part in the general policy of the South, which opposed manufactures. After the war, she was fully alive to the fact, that it was only by diversification of employment, that she could escape from the low experience she suffered by her earlier policy."²⁶ As a stimulus abroad, J. B. Killebrew published an accurate survey, *Tennessee, the Home for Intelligent Immigrants*, in which he stressed the fact that the Bureau of Agriculture "had encouraged the dividing of large landed estates and had stimulated lucrative small farming, encouraged cultivation of the grasses and

²⁴Appendix to House Journal. Tennessee 1868-'69. p. 95.

²⁵Ibid., p. 87.

²⁶Appendix to House Journal. Tennessee 1879. p. 15. Report of Gov. W. G. Brownlow.

sheep husbandry, and the preservation of the soil—the fostering mother of all prosperity.”²⁷

To prove that successful small farming, with each farm thoroughly self-sustaining, was possible in the state, Killebrew penned the following sketch of country life as he had observed it:

The most distinguishing characteristic of the average farmer in East Tennessee is the effort which he makes to supply what may be required for his own consumption. He is indeed a great provider of the necessities of life. He is ambitious to live within himself. It is not uncommon on a small farm to see a patch of cotton, which the women of the household work into cloth; a spot given to tobacco for home consumption; a field of sorghum for domestic use; a few acres of wheat are raised for flour; corn and oats or hay to feed the stock, which usually consists of a few sheep to supply wool for winter clothes, cows from which a considerable revenue is derived by the manufacture of butter, and a brood mare or two from which the farmer rears his mules and horses for farm use. Besides these, an abundance of standard vegetables, poultry, a few beehives and orchards are necessary adjuncts to nine-tenths of the farms in East Tennessee. . . . The farmers of East Tennessee have but little use for money.²⁸

Not money then but “land, the machine which produces food,”²⁹ furnished the main line of appeal. Killebrew proudly asserted that his report met with marked attention and favor from abroad, in proof for which statement he cited the receipt of over 10,000 letters of inquiry.

Everywhere people were restless, fearful, confused; it was, therefore, no miracle that response came from diverse sources. In the North, the masses distrusted capitalistic industrialism because of the social injustice it created. In the war-torn South, Sidney Lanier protested in Ruskin-like accents against the chilling effects of trade and deplored the fact that factories, dominating the cities, possessed the very life of the people. He preached an agrarian doctrine advocating that “our republic”, as well as the new South, “needed the small farmer for the pure substance of self-reliant manhood which he digs out the ground.”³⁰ With Killebrew he made

²⁷Appendix to *House Journal. Tennessee 1879*. “Report by Killebrew”, p. 10.

²⁸Killebrew, J. B. *The Home of Intelligent Immigrants*. 1879. p. 38.

²⁹Appendix to *House Journal. Tennessee 1879*. p. 14.

³⁰Lanier, Sidney. *Retrospects and Prospects*. New York, 1899, p. 109.

an urgent plea to diversify and not risk all on one crop.²¹ He censured the southern farmers who raised cotton but no corn. In 1870, from a vantage point on Lookout Mountain, Lanier had viewed the desolate waste and poverty in the Tennessee River Valley where vast prosperous estates and happiness once were. He recognized the need for a change in economic and social policies.

III. THE NEW AGRARIANISM IN TENNESSEE: THOMAS HUGHES.

In England, too, the old order was mightily disturbed. The machine, supplanting traditional craftsmanship, had become the symbol of progress, a fact terrifying to the intellectuals. Ruskin thundered his protests against the iron law of wages, the Ricardian theory of rent, the creed of Manchesterism, the resulting slums, filth, and misery. Carlyle, Arnold, and Newman revolted against the prevailing property and mammon worship. It was Thomas Hughes, however, whose sensitive feeling for the gentle-folk of England caused him to look about in the interests of young British yeomen "with good education and small capital, the class which of all others is most overcrowded in England at this time. . . . Of the many sad sights", he said, "there is none sadder than this, of first rate human material going hopelessly to waste, and in too many cases beginning to turn sour and taint, instead of strengthening, the public life. The remedy is to turn to the soil and to agricultural work which these needy ones can't do in England because land is too dear and caste prejudice against manual labor is too strong."²²

If virgin land was not available in England, there was plenty of it in Tennessee where "the honest man by frugality and industry, could acquire a competence for himself and his family and in so doing eat the bread of independence."²³ Through the London agency of the Board of Aid to Land Ownership, of which Hughes was president, he got in touch with Colonel Killebrew, who in turn submitted a special survey of the East Tennessee lands pro-

²¹Hughes, Thomas. "Colonel Killebrew's Report," in Rugby, Tennessee. pp. 140-147.

²²Perkins, N. C., *op. cit.*, pp. 78-79.

²³Donaldson, Thomas. *The Public Domain*. Government Printing Press. 1884. p. 345.

posed as the site for the American Rugby. Since Hughes maintained that agriculture was vital to the life of the colony, Killebrew elaborated his conclusions thus:

It is not claimed that the soil of Rugby, or the Cumberland Plateau, is rich. On the contrary, it is generally poor, or at most only of medium quality. It is a rare thing in the United States to find rich soil, plenty of timber, perfect healthfulness, and desirableness of climate, cheap land, convenient markets, and easy access to means of transportation all combined. That Rugby possesses all these essentials to a happy home, except rich soil, no one, it is believed, will deny. It is equally true that soil, by proper culture and handling, can be improved and made to yield remunerative crops. . . . Often the very fertility of the soil breaks up those habits of systematic industry which lie at the very foundation of all permanent progress."

To see for himself how things stood, Hughes crossed the Atlantic, coming via New York, Cincinnati, Knoxville, and Sedgemoor, from which mountain station he pressed on over hazardous roads to his goal where energetic young men might set to work in the best conditions and old blunders would have the smallest chance of repeating themselves. What were these blunders from which they were trying to escape? Who were to be the "select" for the experiment?

The rising generation, Hughes explained, was sick of old ways of living. Youth was tired of the wastefulness and thriftlessness of the old methods of supplying needs, of shoddy, of the manner of learning without ruinous sacrifice.

"The time is no doubt on our side," he continued as he addressed a group of restless Britishers. "The power of association to lift the masses of the people in every country to a fuller and higher citizenship, to give them a steadily increasing influence, is the most obvious, as well as the most important phenomenon of the last half of the nineteenth century in which we are living. Industrial association is the latest born of the forces at work in modern society. Timid persons clothe it with dreadful attributes and give it bad names as big black democracy, communism, socialism, the revolution, etc. No one will be inclined to deny that there is infinite danger, as

"Killebrew, *op. cit.*, pp. 140—147.

well as infinite hope, for society in this waking up of its largest class."²⁸

However, for his timely experiment, he designated specifically that the Tennessee Rugby was intended for the "Will Wimbles of England recruited from the ranks of mechanics and tradespeople and for the overplus of intelligent young men for whom there seemed to be no proper occupation at home."²⁹ There was no intention to make the colony exclusively English. Indeed, Hughes insisted that for the good of the race, perhaps of the world, there should be cordial alliance between Englishmen and Americans in such colonies. This new home was designed to please most likely gardeners, small farmers, stock raisers, carpenters, younger sons of the clergy, and merchants who decided on an open-air life and were not afraid to work. The five young Englishmen who preceded him to the Tennessee site were "public school men", boasting of an Etonian who, incidentally, led the party from the railroad platform at Sedgemoore where Hughes alighted, through gullies and precipitous roads up to more open ground where they reached "the city of the future and in the dusk saw the bright gleam of light under the verandahs of two slightly wooden houses."³⁰ From this tiny nucleus they hoped to create a center of human activities in which "a reverent, godly life would grow up and spread over all neighboring regions of the South highlands."³¹

Their motive was one—to establish a community. Playing safe, Hughes defined the word 'community' which "had an unenviable reputation in England and a sinister one in the New World." To him it implied "something in common", "some bonds to bind them together."³² He had no sympathy with the state communism of Europe represented by Marx and Lassalle besides many inferior men in America. His vision was "not to realize a paternal state, the owner of all property, finding easy employment and liberal maintenance for all citizens, reserving all profits for the community, and paying no dividends to individuals."³³ The Rugby

²⁸Hughes, T. "Lecture on the History and Objects of Cooperation," p. 23.

²⁹Perkins, *op. cit.* p. 78. Cf. Hughes. "The Traders in England" in *Rugby, Tennessee*, pp. 8—14.

³⁰Hughes, Thomas. *Rugby, Tennessee*. Macmillan, 1881, p. 41.

³¹*Ibid.*, p. 94.

³²*Ibid.*, p. 95.

³³*Ibid.*, p. 96.

members were content with laws relating to private property and family life, as they found them, feeling quite able to modify such laws in certain directions as their own corporate conscience ripened.

Besides, Hughes expressed impatience over some evils resulting from overstrained desire of possession and the worship of private property. He condemned the doctrine of *laissez faire*, and the acknowledged law of self-interest which had gone ahead scornfully for thirty years and was the direct cause of landing them where they now were. There was no desire to tread one another under foot. To the contrary, the spirit of combination was to permeate the air even to the laying out of the town for the "common good". Two beautiful streams running through the site, walks carefully planned, drives, parks, gardens, and recreation grounds were to be considered common property and the natural beauty of the place was to be treated reverently and preserved for future generations.

In keeping with their idealistic views, private property had to be fenced in. Houses were to be simple and slightly in form and proportion. Public buildings, church, school, courthouse, and town hall were to contribute beauty and order to the model town. As speculative builders with a civic conscience the founders laid out a plan which provided spaciousness and aesthetic beauty.

The prevalent theory that the fittest were the only ones to survive was modified. Essentials to life, food, clothes, and other necessities, the colonists agreed, had to be supplied either by self or by some "common" machinery. The latter was given preference. Hence a commissary, a center of supply, was established immediately. Every householder was a member and part owner of it. The initial cost of erecting the building and equipping it was divided into five dollar shares. The business was directed and superintended by a Board of Council chosen by the members, and each one was to get "whatever profits were made on his own consumption".

The colony company owned the land on which grazed a "common herd". Extensive plans provided for increasing this source of income. Unbridled competition, the law of the day, was abandoned. Healthy rivalry was encouraged. Believing that every community should stimulate keen interest in individual efforts, the members advocated diversified farming to see who could grow the

best corn, the best tobacco, and the prize fruit. The same feeling was to apply elsewhere: "who could write the best books, teach best, govern best; in a word, live most nobly".⁴¹

All of their difficulties did not lie in material things. "We are fighting against the Zeit Ggeist [*sic*], the spirit of our time, no where so strong and so decided as in America."⁴² Central organization, as satisfactory as it might prove for supplying the wants of the physical man, would provide no remedy for spiritual needs. Matters religious and spiritual were personal and had to be met by the individual. Therefore, in this community all attempts to interfere with a man's freedom were frowned upon. In spite of the general belief that each should worship as he pleased, the entire colony was willing to experiment to find out whether or not different Christian denominations could agree well enough to worship in one church.

So much for the preliminary scheme of Rugby. Only two months after Hughes' arrival, its population numbered 120. Besides the commissary, there had sprung up a "hotel, a boarding house, barracks, an 'asylum', an office and various shanties".⁴³ Gradually the company spent large sums in opening up natural attractions near their site, in making roads, bridges and other substantial improvements. At the entrance to the town was the Hughes Free Public Library whose 800 volumes were presented to the Colony by publishers of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia as "a token of respect for Thomas Hughes." Close to this was the combined church and school building where "divine worship" was held twice every Sunday and elementary school activities were carried on the whole year. Besides, there was a high school—The Arnold School for Boys, which was connected with the University of the South and which, it was hoped, would make Rugby the educational center for a large radius.⁴⁴ Tennis courts and cricket grounds were made possible by a collection to which all interested contributed.

"We are having a bully time on this continent", wrote a member to his friends in England, but in the same stroke he advised

⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 102.

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 103.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 129.

⁴⁴McWhirter, A. J. *Revised Hand-book of Tennessee*. Nashville, 1885. pp. 125—126.

no one to join them unless he was prepared for hard manual labor. Get all the culture you can before you come, was the gist of his remarks, for the "higher your intellectual and social background, the happier and better woodsmen you will be."⁴⁸ In spite of the continuous work from daylight to dark, the initiates in Rugby life still preached the message, "Go back to the land", for they realized that there was no outlook for thousands like themselves when they got through school, and that there was no place better than Rugby in which to experiment.

Not for a moment did Hughes mislead the young men with promises he could not keep. Repeatedly he warned them, "The great thing is to remember that in all his preparations (for his trip to Tennessee) that he is going to try an experiment, which *may not succeed*."⁴⁹

Two years after the official opening, in the biennial report of the Commissioner of Agriculture, Statistics, and Mines, A. W. Hawkins reported, "On one of our principal thoroughfares the newly arrived constitute a very large proportion of the present population. The colony at Rugby, so long threatened with failure, under wise management is manifesting new vitality, and is filling up with a desirable class of immigrants, especially from Ohio."⁵⁰

From Knoxville came further comment: "A Swiss Colony for several years has been settled on this Cumberland Mountain, and has succeeded very well. The colony at Rugby, planted by Mr. Hughes, has not succeeded well, because his laws and regulations did not leave the colonists freedom enough, and because the colonists thought the land owners were speculating too sharply on them."⁵¹

Such opinions opposed that of Hughes himself. In commercial contribution to the commonwealth the colony was practically a total failure. However, its founder, always antagonistic toward the mad pursuit of gain, modestly asserted, "I prefer slow and steady growth. New settlements are frequently demoralized by feverish activity of mercantile speculation, the disgrace of our

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, p. 132.

⁴⁹Hughes, *Vacation Rambles*, p. 110.

⁵⁰*Biennial Report of Commissioner of Agriculture, Statistics and Mines*. Nashville, 1883, p. 19.

⁵¹*The Mineral, Agricultural Resources of East Tennessee*. Knoxville, 1883, p. 16.

time."¹⁰ His dream pictured a society where the humblest members living by the "labour of their own hands, would be of such strain and culture that they would be able to meet princes in the gate without embarrassment and self-assertion."¹¹

¹⁰Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, p. 105.

¹¹*Ibid*, p. 106.

(To be continued in next issue)

by Joe Horrell

ION

Oh sir you have quaffed afflatuses with fire
and without rule and your judgment writhes
in flames and your distending pulses tire:
you are somewhat in default on reason's tithes.

Homer is not all: there are others you
might rhapsodize and pinnacle on the white
daintiness of women, but you drew
the fire and drank the furious flames in spite.

Breathe your hot breath on poetry and sear
the chilly mind, with convoluting guile
outfit us with a tremor or a tear:
but I can only take you with a smile.

by Charles Granville Hamilton

STORM OVER TUPELO

When Franklin Delano came to Tupelo,
On a Sunday morning, seventy thousand
Hill farmers who never saw anyone bigger than Bilbo
Broke loose from chores and churches and Sunday Schools,
In spite of all the Baptist preachers of Itawamba,
Coming down to see the sight of their lives.

Slow and scant Tombigee starts
In little canals and bottoms and hilly farms.
Harrisburg and Brice's Crossroads,
Bloody with many a Michigan farm lad
Wondering why he should die in this red clay
Far from the cool waters of Huron.
As witty John Allen remarked in Congress:
The South gave up when the Yankees took Tupelo.
(Private John Allen among the brigadier generals).
Seventy thousand churned around
The Confederate monument in the town's center.
The New Deal vanished back in smoke in the distance,
And the crowd vanished into the hills and hollows,
Never again to gather in Tupelo.
Smart aleck New Southerners, progressive Rotarians,
Yankee-imitating chambers of commerce,
Tore down the monument to their grandfathers
That the trivial traffic of Tupelo might race undelayed.
Chevrolet triumphant over Forrest and Lee,
Machine over man, force over fortitude, speed over South.

Saturday nights the moonlight over the courthouse
Glistens on negroes selling watermelons,
The chuckle, guffaw, back-slapping, howdy-sister,
Loafing, sauntering, bargaining, take-it-easy, big boy.

"More fools and half dollars in Tupelo
Than anywhere but Dallas", said John Ringling.
Hoboes drift in on the Frisco from St. Louis
And pick up M & O freights to Mobile.
Dirty greasy benches—hopeless faces—
Move on south in winter, north in summer.
Excited countrymen waiting for trains to bring
Cousins from far-off Birmingham or metropolitan Memphis.
Up to shop from Verona, gentlemen, maybe,
And girls from Nettleton, Guntown, and Mantachie.
All the youth of Prentiss and Pontotoc counties
On Saturday night jostling by plate glass windows
With the hunger of youth for what they know not,
So they buy a hamburger and a Coca-Cola
And ride home laughing and whispering in a schoolbus.

TVA and its red, white, and blue blazona.
The Yankees have taken Tupelo. First TVA city
Advertised from Toronto to Tampa, proud and self-conscious,
A girl just getting of age—to be first—
Is a new, strange, sweet sensation.
Around the corners the few power company stockholders
Whine their complaints as they swallow more Roosevelt beer.

Bankers may embezzle millions but Tupelo comes back.
Three thousand working in the garment factories,
Buses bring them in from the country so they won't organize,
Tupelo owned, not begging (like her sister towns)
Sweatshops to move in without taxes and exploit the white girls.

"Whom your fathers resisted with bullets and bayonet
You sell your children to with greasy faces of greed
To grind out their youth for your dirty dollars
O generation of swine."

Roaches on the floor of the Jeff Davis Hotel: The New South.

Half-drunk legionaries took the town.
Exhibitionism, usual-brutal-roughness, and vice,
And the churches called off their Sunday night services
To sing praises to war and to Jesus

Before a midnight hot show was put on there.
Idols may lurk behind Guatemalan altars—
Behind each pulpit the flag is the sacred ikon.
 "Shut up, Jesus, we don't want to hear you; we're busy;
 But if you will come around at eleven o'clock some Sun-
 day morning
To that hideous, brick edifice on the corner—
Between erotic singing and operatic, lipsticked choirs,—
We may let you speak for not over ten minutes,
Providing of course you say something
Constructive."

Plenty religion to Tupelo. Prosperous enough
To afford a Christian Science rest room.
Two big Baptist churches; one set said the pastor
Was guilty of everything south of murder;
Outvote—they started a new showy temple.
In Calvin's citadel a young modernist swears softly.
Hundreds joined the Wesleyan flock
Under the intellectual leadership of a brother
Who thinks Simeon Fess is a statesman.
A social club of would-be elite
Embellish the faith of Babbitt with prayer book trimmings.
 "Stay away from us, O gentle Nazarene,
 You might disturb our image of yourself.
No longer do we make of you a warrior
With sword and shield, a militant crusader,
Nor do we reckon you a judge forensic.

No, as a bland suave optimistic salesman
With maxims guaranteed to make more money,
We make you; or a more legendary Lincoln
Proclaiming meaningless emancipations
With Nordic condescension to inferiors."

With the blatant bellowing of a bank clerk, national guard,
 fascist—
All Saints ordained a young handsome rector
As the secretary of a sweatshop chamber of commerce

Courting, convict labor plats came up the aisle carrying the collection;

Receive thou the office of a priest.

A funnel of sun and wind dropped by Palm Sunday night
Uninvites and unforgotten.

Sweeping ten miles into Tupelo with a roar like a dozen
freights

From the quiet Presbyterian cemetery of White Zion.

Lights flickering, glass flying, roofs vanishing,

Gas escaping, live wires falling, water mains spouting,

Rain falling in rivers, fires springing up every moment—

Bricks and debris and falling trees

Suddenly dropping on brittle housetops.

Doctors rushing around the wounded and dying.

Thousands more homeless and hopeless.

On an open hill a drunken negro

Bangs out jazz on a wind-dropped piano.

The storm passed the milltown, it passed by the stores,

Tapping the best houses; it left the best people,

While it hit the poor whites who lived on the edges,

Escaping the back-breaking, hill cotton chopping

To live at ease in a city.

The block-long school with its hundred rooms

Torn to pieces and shattered. Split Baptist churches,

(The storm took both). Beat on the Methodist, tore in the
Calvinist,

Swept away the Episcopal as with a broom,

Laid bricks on the altar and bricks on the pews.

Only unhurt was the little Catholic chapel—

Phenomena unaccountable to natives;

The world turned upside down

As the band played when Cornwallis marched out to surrender.

Negro churches just feeling good,

Preachers chanting and sisters shouting,

Split to pieces like kindling wood;

The storm came whirling and took them home.

Rough black element in the crime section

Who burned down the hull made from old tin cans,

That the hardworking teacher built on a hill,

They went from their evil in a moment's breath.
Holy Rollers were feeling fine,
Shouting and singing and moaning loud,
Speaking with tongues and testimonies deep
Lifted for a moment from their sin and grime,
And Mississippi and cotton fields and fear,
They went to glory in a moment's time.
The whole congregation swept over the hill
Into the lake. And the waters were still.

"Out in the hills of Itawamba
Old men murmur as they sit around
Whittling and spitting at the crossroads store:
Roosevelt came to Tupelo on Sunday
And they were all looking for Him.
The Lord our God is a jealous God.
The Lord our God is a jealous God."

by Joe Horrell

DIRGE

I have not seen you since the night of flowers
and Debussy's moonlight:
the quivering night
that fled like a faun leaving remembered hours.

Your face was white against the dark lagoon
and perfumed with haunting negligence:
but the heart's diligence
cannot deny stars paled by a heavy moon.

The moon is weary now and the constant hours
that we feed will I fear run dry
of nostalgic melody: then it will die,
for I really have not seen you since the night of flowers.

by John R. Dallinger

ISAIAH THE PROPHET AND HIS DISCIPLES

THE great effect which the influence of Isaiah's life and work made upon the subsequent development of religious thought is a fact which is not as much appreciated as it deserves. To achieve this however, it will be necessary, in so far as reliable scholarship has been able to ascertain the facts, to give a survey of the prophet's teaching and then to sketch the immediate results which followed from that work in the generations that come after. The task is not so simple as at first it might seem to be, because the separation between the indisputable oracles of Isaiah, himself, and those which a later age attributed to him is still a matter of dispute among Old Testament scholars, who differ very widely as to what passages in the book of Isaiah are from his pen and what are from those who carried on and developed his teaching.

That the influence of Isaiah had tremendous effect upon the age that followed his lifetime and in fact upon the Jewish church at least five centuries later, is attested by the prominence which the book that bears his name has in the prophetic writings that have been preserved to us. The book of Isaiah stands first in the list of the later prophets in the Jewish canon of scriptures. It is the longest of the prophetic books, comprising sixty-six chapters in our present arrangement. But when an investigation is made of the contents of those chapters, it is soon found that the figure of the prophet appears in much less than a third of them. Evidently, therefore, even from a superficial study, it can easily be detected that a great mass of anonymous prophetic writing was assigned by the compilers of the prophetic canon to the illustrious name of a prophet whose unquestioned writings form a very small portion of the complete roll or book. It is not likely that such an assignment would have been made in this way, had not the work of the prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz, had such significant effect upon a subsequent age. The great prophets Amos and Hosea, whose messages were uttered a generation or two be-

fore, made nothing like the effect upon their followers that Isaiah made, and their writings received no great additions made to them as in the case of Isaiah, whose authentic oracles in so many ways, as we shall see, resemble the noble utterances of those great pioneers in the reformation of the religion of Israel. It is not to minimize the importance of Isaiah's message to say that he followed in the footsteps of those illustrious predecessors and reiterated to a large extent their oracles. But if it were not for the response which was almost at once made to Isaiah's message, we should never have heard of his teachers nor of his own individual contribution to the unfolding of the divine revelation. But for the personality of Isaiah, the Son of Amoz, and the influence which it exerted, it is not too much to say that the whole subsequent religious development of mankind would never have taken place.

To understand this, it is necessary for us to examine the background in which the prophet lived and worked. For without such an understanding of the history of his times and its interpretation through him and his successors there can be no true appreciation of his genius and of the vital importance which his personality has for all time. For I purpose also in this essay, to show that Isaiah is not just an interesting personality of a far-distant and exceedingly remote past, but a living witness to truths of God which have their eternal application in every age and most vitally in this fourth decade of the twentieth century in which we live today. So, without further introduction, let me introduce the man from what knowledge has been preserved about him and his era.

I.

It was in the year of the death of King Uzziah of Judah, as the prophet tells in the account of his vision, that he was called to be God's spokesman to Judah and Israel. That year was in the neighborhood of 740 B. C. Uzziah had had a very long and prosperous reign, though in his latter years he was afflicted with leprosy. It had been a time of comparative peace. The king had recovered the territory of Edom to the south of Judah which had been independent since the time of Solomon, two centuries before. The importance of the conquest was that it opened up to Judah the trade routes to the East and South through the holding of the

port of Ezion-Geber on the Red Sea. A flourishing trade followed which filled Jerusalem, the capital city, with costly treasures of all sorts and a mania for this suddenly-to-be-acquired wealth took such hold upon the leading citizens of the nation that there was lost all regard for justice and fair-dealing in their relations with their less-fortunate neighbors. The richer some of these individuals became, the greater was their craze for more property and material comforts, and all scruples about honesty and consideration for the lives and honor of others were cast to the winds. There was certainly a crying need for a true reformer to come to the forefront and awaken the nation to the dangers inevitably to result from so complete a moral collapse as had taken place. But the social and economic situation of the time is not the entire picture. There is the religious element to be considered as well and its popular interpretation. There was never a time when religious sacrifices and festivals had been celebrated on so lavish a scale in Judah, since the prosperous reign of Solomon. Altars were loaded with bullocks and goats and lambs, and on every high hill the smoke of these offerings rose in clouds. The favor of Jehovah was resting upon his people, was the popular opinion and they were showing their gratitude by their lavish generosity. Outwardly there never was a more religious time. But that there was any connection between religion and moral conduct, did not seem to have entered the consciousness of anyone. Again there was a crying need for a true reformer to come to the forefront and reveal to a self-satisfied people the truth about God and His demand upon His worshippers. Then, finally in the third place, there must be a glance taken at the international side of the picture if our understanding of the background is to be complete. The world of the year 740 B. C. or rather that part of the world in the near-East, was enjoying the Indian summer of tranquility before the cold winter of storm and stress was to break upon it. The little states of Israel and Judah, embracing perhaps a million and a half or two million inhabitants, occupying a territory roughly of the size of the state of Vermont, less than 10,000 square miles had been at peace, because their powerful neighbors, Egypt to the south-west and Assyria to the north-east, were in a weak state due to internal troubles. It was inevitable that when either of those great empires became strong and embarked upon a career of conquest, that the

little Palestinian states could not offer any effectual resistance, and already the eastern threat was almost at hand. Assyria was just beginning to recover its strength after a century of impotence and by the middle of the century had started to move westward. Between Israel and Assyria, lay the Aramaean kingdom of Damascus, the hereditary enemy of Israel. At first, therefore, the Assyrian advance brought relief to Israel by removing the threat of Aramaean attack, and so Israel under the second Jeroboam was enjoying a prosperity and peace at the same time that Judah under Uzziah was in a similar state. By an ominous coincidence the death of the two monarchs, Jeroboam and Uzziah, occurred about the same time, and the event of their passing from the earthly scene, after long and able reigns (Jeroboam reigned for 41 years, and Uzziah or Azariah, as he is sometimes called, for 52) was one to cause concern to those who were not too blinded by their wealth and their pride. And here also there was a crying need for one to come forth to interpret the signs of the times and arouse a complacent people before the storm should break upon them and destroy them.

In a very brief way, this is the background sketch of the year when a young man of noble birth and of princely lineage entered into the royal sanctuary at Jerusalem and received the call to be the one to meet the needs of the times, social, religious, and international, and to interpret God's message to His people, whether they would hear or not. The details of the prophet's account of his call in the sixth chapter of our present book are so familiar that they need not be restated here. It will be sufficient to point out one or two significant lessons which the prophet drew from that remarkable experience which he underwent. First of all, there came to him a consciousness of a new and startling conception of the nature of Jehovah, the God of Israel. That conception was of His transcendent holiness. (I use the term "Jehovah", rather than that of Yahweh which was probably the true pronunciation of the Hebrew tetragrammaton, because through long usage it has become the conventional English designation of the name of the deity). This holiness which the young Isaiah experienced in his vision, was not merely the ritual and ceremonial holiness that was universally associated with deity in contrast with all else, but was a moral holiness, which could not tolerate anything that was morally

defiling or unclean. In such a presence, the young nobleman was made deeply conscious of his own unworthiness and the unworthiness of the environment in which he lived. "Woe is me", he cried, "for I am undone. For I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah Sebaoth." The contrite and penitent response of the young Isaiah was rewarded by a symbolic cleansing and the divine call to bring to the people of the land the message of Jehovah's condemnation unless the self-complacent pride of the nation should humble itself in penitent submission before its God. Probably at a later time, when the prophet recorded the scene of his call to become a prophet, through his reflection upon the apparent failure of his mission, he was moved to attribute that failure to the express will of God Himself. For he writes as if God commanded him, "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and smear over their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and turn again and be healed." At any rate, convinced of the supreme moral holiness of Jehovah, in comparison with which the nation was sinful to a deplorable degree, Isaiah went out to preach condemnation and to denounce in unsparing language the evils which now so clearly he saw everywhere about him. There were social sins of the deepest dye and the prophet denounced them in an uncompromising fashion. "Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and to the writers that write perverseness; to turn aside the needy from justice, and to rob the poor of the people of their right, that widows may be their spoil, and that they may make the fatherless, their prey." It was practically impossible for the poor to obtain redress for these injustices of the great land-owners at the courts, for the magistrates were controlled by them and deliberately falsified their decrees. The prophet was unsparing in his condemnation. But his chief denunciation of the nation as a whole for its proud satisfaction with itself, and one of his finest prophecies, is directed against that deadly sin which was to bring destruction upon the land in the day of Jehovah's visitation which was near at hand. Unfortunately, the text of this masterly oracle has been badly corrupted in transmission, and scholars are not agreed as to the correct restoration. The following is the suggestion of Professor Fullerton which appeals to me as a very plausible

ible reconstruction. "Enter into the clefts of the rocks, and hide ye in the caves of the earth, from before the terror of Jehovah and from his glorious majesty when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. For he has forsaken his people, the house of Jacob; their land is so full of traders, and of bargains with the foreigners; their land is so full of silver, there is no end to their treasures; their land is so full of horses, there is no end to their chariots; their land is so full of idols, there is no end to their images. But the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of man shall be brought low, and Jehovah alone shall be exalted when he arises to shake terribly the earth. For Jehovah Sebaoth has a day on all that is proud and on all that is lifted up; on all cedars of Lebanon, and on all oaks of Bashan; on all lofty mountains, and on all towering hills; on every high tower and on every fortified wall; and on all ships of Tarshish and on all costly vessels. But the loftiness of man shall be brought down, and the haughtiness of man shall be brought low, and Jehovah alone shall be exalted when he rises to shake terribly the earth." The effectiveness of this matchless poem is heightened by the repetition of the refrain; and the vivid imagery set forth in the contrasting balanced method, customary to Hebrew poetry, is superb. Not only is the writer a great prophet but he is likewise a great poet. But it is with the content of the message rather than its literary style that we are here primarily concerned. It is only in humble penitence before God that the land can hope to escape destruction, and there seems to be no sign of such repentance at hand. Another oracle is directed against the proud women of Jerusalem who delighted in their beautiful and costly adornments. "Moreover Jehovah said, 'Because the daughters of Zion are haughty and walk with outstretched necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go and making a tinkling with their feet; therefore Jehovah will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion and will lay bare their shame.'" We are reminded of the savage oracle of Amos against the noble ladies of Samaria, whom he designated "cows of Bashan", and who he declared would be dragged off their silken couches with hooks in their buttocks and led away into captivity. Such wanton display of finery purchased at the price of oppression of the poor deserved the severest condemnation. The two situations in Israel and Judah were parallel, and afford a good

illustration of the social conditions as they existed in the prosperous reigns of Jeroboam and Uzziah. The chief interest of Isaiah was naturally Jerusalem and his concern with social abuses there caused him to spare no efforts to try to bring to the consciousness of the people the greatness of their sin against God and the terrible consequences that must inevitably follow if they continued on their evil course. But the prophet has one great ode in which he turns his attention to the kingdom of Israel and its capital, Samaria. Chaos and confusion followed the end of the dynasty of Jehu, and Isaiah could see clearly a greater calamity at hand as the Assyrian threat loomed on the eastern horizon. Pride and arrogance must be punished and Jehovah's outstretched arm was ready to strike. One stanza of the poem which alone has been preserved in its original form will serve to indicate the prophet's message, "Jehovah sent a word unto Jacob and it hath lighted upon Israel, and all the people shall know. Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, that say in pride and in stoutness of heart, 'The bricks are fallen, but we will build them with hewn stone; the sycamores are cut down, but we will replace them with cedars.' Therefore Jehovah will set upon high against him the adversaries of Rezin and will join together his enemies, the Syrians on the east and Philistines on the west and they shall devour Israel with open mouth. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." The poem concludes with a vivid picturesque description of the advancing enemy which well illustrates the greatness of Isaiah as a master of style and of forceful and compelling prophetic insight. "And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from afar and will hiss for them from the end of the earth; and behold they shall come with speed swiftly. None shall be weary or stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their sandals be broken; whose arrows are sharp, and all their bows bent; their horses' hoofs shall be accounted as flint, and wheels of their chariots as a whirlwind, their roaring shall be like a lioness, they shall roar like young lions; yea, they shall roar, and lay hold of the prey, and carry it away safe, and there shall be none to deliver. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still."

These oracles that I have quoted thus far apparently come from

the early years of the prophet's ministry, between 740 and 735. They indicate that the first concern of the young Isaiah, who probably was in his twenties, was with social and moral sins, and particularly the pride and self-satisfaction which had stultified all conscientious scruples against injustice and indecency. Perhaps from about the same period comes the one oracle preserved to us in which Isaiah attacked the religious practices of his age, trying to awaken the people to see that Jehovah desired to be worshipped not with outward ceremonies but with moral uprightness of heart. "What unto me is the multitude of your sacrifices? saith Jehovah; I have had enough of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts: and I delight not in the flood of bullocks or of he goats. Bring no more oblations of vanity; incense is an abomination unto me; new moons and sabbath, the calling of assemblies, I cannot endure. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." There is an eternal lesson for every age set forth here. Our own age too often confuses religious worship with rites and ceremonies and ignores the practical application of religion toward the removal of social ills. We cannot love God unless we practice true charity in our relation toward our neighbors. The picture which Isaiah paints of conventional religious practice is a timeless one.

But it is not primarily as a social and religious reformer that Isaiah deserves his great fame. His predecessors Amos and Hosea, as I have shown, were the true pioneers in this field. The great contribution which Isaiah made was as the statesman who brought his religion into relation with the troubled politics of his day and the ominous international situation which threatened not only the extinction of national independence for Israel and Judah, but the destruction of their religion as well. According to the popular beliefs of the day, a nation's religion was a part of its life, and the death of the nation meant the death of its God and therefore its religion. The great message which Isaiah proclaimed was that Jehovah, although the God of Israel, was independent of the existence of the nation. He was not part and parcel of the nation and

had never been so. In the beginning of Israel as a nation in the days of Moses, Jehovah had chosen Israel as His people and bound Himself to them by a covenant which could be dissolved at any time, if its conditions were violated. Thus if Israel were false to its obligations by refusing to be obedient to Jehovah's commandments, Jehovah could and must remove His protection from Israel and allow her enemies to punish her for that violation of the covenant. And the prophet interpreted the coming disaster for Israel and Judah at the hands of Assyria as Jehovah's punishment of His people by using a foreign nation as the instrument of His anger. Although the following prophecy belongs late in the prophetic career of Isaiah, I mention it here to illustrate this startling interpretation of history and religion which Isaiah made, and but for which, Israel's religion must have perished as did the religions of Moab and Edom and the other neighboring nations. "Woe to Assyria, the rod of mine anger, the staff in mine indignant hand! I will send him against a profane nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire in the streets. Howbeit, he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart thus consider; but it is in his heart to destroy, and to cut off nations not a few. For he hath said, 'By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I have understanding; and I have removed the bounds of the peoples; and as one gathering eggs that are forsaken, have I gathered all the earth: and there was none that moved the wing, or that opened the mouth, or chirped.' Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? Shall the saw magnify itself against him that wieldeth it?" The audacity of a citizen of a little insignificant kingdom, such as Judah, to conceive of his nation's deity directing the course of the mighty Assyrians' empire!

Yet, Isaiah's remarkable religious experience at the outset of his ministry had revealed to him a conception of the nature of Jehovah that was far in advance of anything hitherto conceived. To be sure, the prophet Amos had approached such a supranational view of the nature of Israel's God, when he declared that not only had Jehovah brought Israel out of Egypt, but also had brought the Philistines from Caphtor and the Aramaeans from Kir. But apparently such an extension of the power of Jehovah had made

little impression, so that when Isaiah expanded it still farther, it came as a religious concept that was quite new and startling, and one that was to have a revolutionary effect upon the subsequent religion of Israel. For, as we shall see presently, Isaiah's disciples, with the encouragement of the miraculous preservation of Jerusalem from the siege of Sennacherib's Assyrian army about 690, promulgated the doctrine of the inviolability of Jerusalem as Jehovah's sacred and holy city, and in the generation that followed set forth the principles of Isaiah's doctrine about Jehovah, embodied in a prophetic codification of religious laws, attributed to Moses, namely the Deuteronomic law. Scholars are agreed that the discovery of the nucleus of our book of Deuteronomy in the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah, 621 B. C., marks the foundation of Judaism, and secured the survival of Israel's religion, even in the face of the destruction of the national state in 586 B. C. It is not, however, so generally recognized that the real founder of the Jewish religion was Isaiah the son of Amoz.

In the year 735 B. C., when the young king Ahaz came to the throne of Judah an international crisis of grave seriousness threatened his little kingdom. The Assyrians under Tiglath-Pileser III were advancing westward, and the kingdoms of Aram and of Israel, laying aside their hereditary enmity toward each other, entered into an alliance to resist the threatening invasion. To make their coalition still stronger, they determined to force Judah to join them, and when Ahaz refused, the armies of Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Damascus advanced against Jerusalem. In this critical moment, Isaiah the statesman-prophet came to Ahaz with counsel from Jehovah, "Then said Jehovah unto Isaiah, go forth now to meet Ahaz, and say unto him, 'Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither let thy heart be faint, because of these two tails of smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria, and of the son of Remaliah.' Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, 'It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass. If ye will not confide, ye shall not abide.'" But Ahaz, a weak-kneed king, was terrified and would not be reassured, so a second message was sent to him by Jehovah through Isaiah. "Jehovah will give you a sign; behold a young woman shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel, for before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings thou abhorrest

shall be forsaken." In other words, the prophet was trying to assure the king that if he would only sit still and have faith in God, the power of the two kings would be broken and Judah would be delivered within two years. But Ahaz refused to take the advice of Isaiah and sent an embassy to the Assyrian king, making Judah a vassal to Assyria. So once again Isaiah came to Ahaz, but this time with no comforting message. Because the king had refused to trust in Jehovah and had sought an alliance with Assyria, the Assyrians would not only crush Damascus and Samaria but would engulf Judah as well. "Behold Jehovah bringeth upon this people the waters of the River, strong and many, and it shall come up over all its channels and go over all its banks and it shall sweep onward into Judah; it shall overflow and pass through; it shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of its wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, Immanuel." An editor inserted into the text the explanatory gloss "even the King of Assyria and all his glory", but the reference was perfectly clear without the explanation. Isaiah well saw the folly of an entangling alliance with mighty Assyria and the danger that must inevitably result therefrom. Following his unsuccessful attempt to show the weak king the true course of action to pursue, Isaiah apparently withdrew into retirement for the remainder of Ahaz's reign, a period of sixteen years. During this time he doubtless watched the course of world events closely, but did not utter any prophetic oracles. Instead, he carefully trained a group of disciples, which is most significant in the light of subsequent events. The death of Ahaz in the year 720 came at a time when revolt against the tyranny of the Assyrian rule began to seethe in Palestine. The center of the revolt was in the Philistine cities which had been conquered by Sargon, at the time of his destruction of Samaria and extinction of the northern kingdom of Israel two years before. The occasion for the revolt was apparently disorders in the east which Sargon was busily engaged in quelling. At this moment Isaiah emerged from retirement with an oracle against Philistia, uttered most likely for the benefit of Judah's young king Hezekiah, who seemed tempted to join in the revolt. The text of the oracle is very corrupt, but in substance it was to the effect that speedy destruction is to come upon Philistia. The warning apparently was heeded as far as Judah was concerned, for when Sargon returned and crushed the

rebellion he did not molest Judah. A few years later, however, a new revolt broke out encouraged by the promise of aid to the small Palestinian states from the Egyptian empire. This time Hezekiah was greatly tempted to cast off his vassalage to Assyria and join with Ashdod and the other small states in revolt. Again Isaiah intervenes, this time by a symbolic action to show the futility of trusting Egypt. "In the year when the Tartan came unto Ashdod and took it, at that time Jehovah spake by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, 'Go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins and put thy shoe from off thy foot.' And he did so, walking naked and barefoot. And Jehovah said, 'Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and a wonder concerning Egypt and concerning Ethiopia; so shall the king of Assyria lead away the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Ethiopia, young and old, naked and barefoot. And the inhabitants of this coastland shall say in that day. Behold such is our expectation, whither we fled for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria: and we, how shall we escape' ". The symbolic act deterred Judah again from joining in the revolt, but in the year 705, Sargon died and his death was the signal for revolts from all parts of the empire. Again Egypt made offers for assistance, and the pro-Egyptian party in Jerusalem brought pressure to bear upon Hezekiah the king to throw off his allegiance to Assyria and cease paying tribute. Isaiah protested with earnestness and vigor against the folly of such a course, declaring that trusting in foreign alliance would be apostasy from Jehovah. "Woe to the rebellious children, saith Jehovah, that take counsel, but not of me; and that make a league, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin; that set out to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to take refuge in the shadow of Egypt. Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the refuge in the shadow of Egypt your confusion. For thus saith the Lord Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel. In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength. And ye would not: but ye said, No, for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, we will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift. One thousand shall flee at the threat of one; at the threat of five shall ye flee: till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as

an ensign on a hill." The vehement protest of Isaiah against the Egyptian alliance went unheeded and Hezekiah joined the revolt and took a prominent part in it, for when the king of Ekron refused to join the confederacy against Assyria, Hezekiah took him prisoner and brought him to Jerusalem as a hostage. Sennacherib, the successor of Sargon, had his hands full with putting down revolts in his eastern provinces for several years, but when he had subdued those rebellious states, he turned his attention to Palestine, and in the year 701 advanced against the coalition of rebels. Isaiah's prediction of the weakness of Egypt as a dependable ally was soon substantiated. Sennacherib easily routed the Egyptian army that had come to the assistance of the Palestinian rebels and then set about crushing them in order. Many of the petty states made their submission promptly, but Hezekiah had gone too far to escape punishment and prepared himself for the inevitable siege. Sennacherib's army invaded Judah and laid it waste. The Assyrian king in his annals boasted, "Forty-six strong cities of Judah, I took. I laid waste. Hezekiah the king, I shut up in his capital Jerusalem like a bird in a gilded cage." Precarious indeed was the situation. Isaiah well described the situation in one of his oracles. "Your country is desolate: your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate. And the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city." "And ye saw the breaches of the city of David, that they were many; and ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool; and ye numbered the houses of Jerusalem, and ye broke down the houses to fortify the wall; ye made also a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool. But ye looked not unto Him that had done this, neither had ye respect unto Him that proposed it long ago. And in that day did the Lord Jehovah Sebaoth, call to weeping and to mourning and to baldness and to girding with sack-cloth: but, behold, joy and gladness, slaying oxen and killing sheep and eating flesh and drinking wine: let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die. And Jehovah Sebaoth revealed himself in mine ears, 'Surely this iniquity shall not be forgiven you till ye die, saith Jehovah Sebaoth.'"

The city was reduced to terrible straits, but Sennacherib did not capture it. Hezekiah paid an enormous tribute, and perhaps

because of trouble arising in the east and the difficulty of maintaining a long siege, the Assyrians' king returned home. Our records are very confusing on this point. Apparently two accounts of a siege are woven together, and in the second one, Isaiah is reported as defying Sennacherib's army and prophesying the inviolability of the city. This is in striking contrast to the preceding oracle just quoted which predicted doom. Judging from the content of the later oracle, I am convinced that it is a prophecy from a later hand, probably a disciple of Isaiah and attributed to him by the compiler of the historical section. We have from the Assyrian records, an account of a later invasion westward by Sennacherib about 690 when an Egyptian army led by Tirhakah came against him and the Assyrian army was destroyed by a pestilence, relieving Jerusalem again. This mysterious plague to the devout followers of Isaiah seemed indeed the work of God delivering his people, even though but a small remnant, and Isaiah's message received its vindication. He had given one of his sons the symbolic name Shearjashub, a remnant will return. His disciples interpreted this as a promise of restoration for Judah, though the master had intended it for a threat. But the fact was Jerusalem was not captured. At the last moment, Jehovah had shown mercy and the miraculous deliverance had taken place. There is no record of the time of Isaiah's death. A very late tradition has it that he was sawn asunder during the persecution of the prophets of Jehovah by king Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah. It is probably this tradition which the author of the epistle to the Hebrews had in mind when he refers to the persecution of the prophets in his great chapter on the heroes of Israel whose faith in God he commends. In fact our knowledge of the history of Israel during the long fifty year reign of Manasseh is practically nil. We gather that there was a reaction from the reforming policy of Hezekiah, and that Manasseh remained a loyal vassal to the Assyrian empire, which reached the height of its power in this period in the reigns of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal. As an indication of this loyalty, Manasseh introduced Assyrian religious practices into Judah and when Jehovah's prophets protested, he put them under a ban, so that no one dared openly to prophesy. It did not mean, however, that prophetic activity ceased. For driven under cover by the persecution, Isaiah's followers proceeded to incorporate

his oracles into writing and to supplement them in the light of the salvation of Jerusalem. They felt that the condemnatory tone of Isaiah's message needed to be alleviated by words of a consolatory nature, and such oracles were written. I believe that that magnificent Messianic poem in chapter nine is a product of this time. Despairing of any hope of better things as long as Manasseh lived, a disciple of Isaiah caught a vision of a new light which should shine out of the prevailing darkness with the promise of a glorious day when a new king should sit on the Davidic throne. "The people that walk in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast increased their joy, they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom; to establish it, and to uphold it, with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah Sebaoth will perform this." Most critics have recognized that this magnificent oracle is not of late post-exilic composition and many attribute it to Isaiah himself; but I feel it peculiarly belongs to the generation following, and indicates the beginning of the later prophetic emphasis upon messages of comfort and hope which form so large a part of post-exilic prophecy. Yet this school of Isaiah's disciples confined their promises of comfort only to Israel. The hatred of Assyria burned hotly in their souls and found its expression in a development of Isaiah's condemnation. They felt their master had not gone far enough to hint that the haughty pride of Assyria must lead to a fall. They proceeded to make that hint a direct promise of destruction. "Therefore thus saith the Lord, Jehovah Sebaoth, O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian, though he smite thee with the rod, and lift up his staff against thee. For yet a very little while, and the indignation against thee shall be accomplished, and mine anger shall be directed to his destruction. And Jehovah Sebaoth shall stir up against him a scourge, and will lift up his rod against him. And it shall come to pass in that day,

that his burden shall depart from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck." We can understand the bitterness of the oppressed Jew for his oppressor. And we can realize why the authors of Deuteronomy who were this same group of disciples of Isaiah together with certain of the Jerusalem priests whom they had converted to their point of view, conceive of no consideration toward the gentiles. The law which they restate in the prophetic spirit and concept of Jehovah as the righteous and holy God, and which is noted for its humane spirit and the principles of love and reverence toward God as its motivation, does not however apply in the relation of Israel toward other nations. Neither of course do the ten commandments themselves, which are but a summary of the whole law. It was not for a couple of centuries, that the greatest successor of Isaiah was to state the teaching of God's universal care for all nations, and that Israel, though God's chosen people, was chosen but for the express purpose of being Jehovah's servant to bring the knowledge of His glory to the ends of the earth. We may well rejoice that the majestic oracles of the great anonymous prophet of the fifth century were included in the roll of the book of Isaiah.

It is difficult to summarize and evaluate the contribution which Isaiah the son of Amoz has made to posterity. Undoubtedly the greatest is that but for him there would have been no survival of the religion of Israel. The training of his disciples in the principle that was fundamental in his teaching, and the fortunate, nay rather providential, deliverance of Jerusalem from destruction a century before the inevitable downfall took place, gave the opportunity for the fixation of that teaching in a form that would have indisputable authority for all time (namely as a prophecy of Moses, the founder of the religion of Israel).

What, then, is that fundamental principle in Isaiah's revelation which became the foundation stone of Judaism and hence of Christianity? Because God's nature is transcendently holy (and yet is at the same time immanent in control of the destinies of mankind) the nation, if it is to find prosperity and happiness, must recognize its eternal dependence upon God, and surrender itself to obedient service and loyalty. Isaiah's religious teaching is set forth in *national* rather than in *individual* terms. The worth of the individual in the eyes of God as apart from the nation is a later con-

cept not to arise until Jeremiah. But even from the national point of view, in this time in which we live, when nation is aroused against nation, and fears on all sides drive the nation to trust in heavier armaments and in defensive alliances, we need again the message of the great eighth century prophet bidding us to trust not in material devices or in foreign alliances, but to have faith in God and trust in Him. "In returning and rest ye shall be saved, in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength."

by Joe Horrell

GRANDMOTHER

She sits with heavy face and grimly knits
but bobbins soon play out: the fresh sod
is plowed again and she smells it and
recalls grandfather gathered up to God.

The unrelenting chair creaks and her door
stands ajar upon the void felicity
which I glut with cubed extravagance:
she abides with her economized sphericity.

Liberating needle never burst her shell
and have her twitch with the neurotic spool:
for she is the grave dynastic nucleus
while I vibrate like a concentric fool.

Oh tristful lady, yielding heart clutched
by wistaria, rag-carpet woven sad,
your quanta last: you are eluding time
and the Lucretian atom-dance gone mad.

by James G. Southworth

WYSTAN HUGH AUDEN

THE award (November 23, 1937) of the King's Gold Medal for poetry to Mr. Wystan Hugh Auden, thirty-year-old poet and dramatist, has pleased those who look upon him as the foremost of the younger English poets. The many who will be annoyed at the award because they consider his work unintelligible need not greatly concern us. Mr. Auden's early poetry is frequently difficult; but the difficulty lies less in his media of communication than with the experiences communicated. A poem is frequently set down as vague which is only difficult. The difficulty lies neither in obscurity of expression nor in the presence of a private joke, but in his attempt at the communication of experiences which have rarely before been frankly dealt with in poetry. Criticism of his work has too often taken the form of a discussion of his prosodic skill as of something independent of his subject matter; but we cannot divorce the thing said from the way of saying it. In the following analysis of his poetic thought one must constantly remember that the technique by which he has communicated his ideas gives importance to the ideas themselves.

One can classify the two chief themes of Mr. Auden's poetry in a number of ways: we might say Auden the Marxist and Auden the Freudian; or, Auden the observer of the political scene and Auden the introvert; or, more specifically, we might say that the poetry reflects Auden's attitude toward and his adjustment to a too-slowly changing society, and his attempts at a solution of his own psychical problem. But these classifications present an obvious danger. Since his poetry expresses moods rather than the results of hard thought, the ideas in some of his early poems differ from those in some of his later ones on the same subject. A change—not a development, but the result of greater experience—is particularly evident, I think, in his attitude toward his personal problem. But too minute a breaking up of the subject matter is often neither possible nor feasible. The poems in which various

aspects of his ideology are closely bound together are, in fact, numerous enough to make generalizations dangerous. In one poem the political background lends significance to his personal experience; in another the personal experience heightens the efficacy of his political castigations. "Here on the cropped grass" is such a poem; and, although dealing with the post-depression era instead of the era of depression, his usual background, it well illustrates the close fusion of the two phases of his subject matter. Everywhere about him—in palace, movie, or cathedral—he hears the "high thin rare continuous worship of the self-absorbed". The people, as those in every age, have been, are being, and will continue to be duped. They are ignorant of the truth. Witness, for example, their attitude toward another war. War is not necessary; it is not noble; it results from a lack of discipline; and those who die are not tragic. The pity is that the post-war generation has not learned the lesson that those fallen in the war would teach—

And out of the turf the bones of those fallen in war continue;
'Know then, cousin, the major cause of our collapse
Was a distortion in the human plastic by luxury produced,

Never higher than in our time were the vital advantages;
To matter entire, to the unbounded vigours of the instrument,
To all logical precision we were the rejoicing heirs.

But pompous, we assumed their power to be our own,
Believed machines to be our hearts' spontaneous fruit,
Taking our premises as shoppers take a tram.

While the disciplined love which alone could have employed these engines
Seemed far too difficult and dull, and when hatred promised
An immediate dividend, all of us hated.

Denying the liberty we knew quite well to be our destiny,
It dogged our steps with its accusing shadow
Until in every landscape we saw murder ambushed.

Unable to endure ourselves, we sought relief
In the insouciance of the soldier, the heroic sexual pose
Playing at fathers to impress the little ladies,

Call us not tragic; falseness made farcical our death:
Nor brave; ours was the will of the insane to suffer
By which since we could not live we gladly died:
And now we have gone for ever to our foolish graves.'

The theme of the necessity of discipline—inspired by Owen's 'The

poetry is in the pity' and Kathy's 'To be rooted in life, that's what I want', and differing from some of the poet's earlier themes and from his own practices—evoke moods that

...give no permission to be idle
For men are changed by what they do;
And through loss and anger the hands of the unlucky
Love one another.

Visible everywhere are the signs of an industrial ruin brought about by foreign competition; and yet little is done about it. Those who should be exerting every nerve to remedy the situation fritter away their time idly, deluding themselves, attaching undue importance to family, themselves the victims of a wrongly-emphasized education ("On Sunday Walks"). The young intellectuals have likewise been guilty of this evasion. They have squandered their time idly, have not faced reality, and are unaware of the changes that have occurred in England. In "Get there if you can" Mr. Auden warns them:

Shut up talking, charming in the best suits to be had in town,
Lecturing on navigation while the ship is going down.

Drop those priggish ways for ever, stop behaving like a stone:
Throw the bath-chairs right away, and learn to leave ourselves alone.

If we really want to live, we'd better start at once to try;
If we don't, it doesn't matter, but we'd better start to die.

The employers, too, have changed for the worse. Despite a restricted vision, they formerly had a love which expressed itself through an ambitious zeal for personal glory—

The liberal appetite and power,
The rightness of a god.

Today, however, they have engaged in guilty acts, have lost nobility, individuality, and honor ("Our hunting fathers told the story"). The land is, in fact, as barren as the country envisaged by Mr. Eliot in *The Waste Land*: the ruling classes are restless; the heretofore submerged classes are even more so. This age is to others not a Golden or a Silver Age, but an Age of Ice, of spiritual barrenness.

No happiness through escape is possible. As the poet stresses in "Hearing of harvests rotting in the valleys", each "island" of

refuge in turn loses its appeal, and the discontented inhabitants move ever on to new "islands". Far better would it be were we to remain on the spot "and . . . rebuild our cities, not dream of islands". A healthy stock-taking is in order, because outwardly it would seem that in the poet's generation history had "struck a bad patch".

What, then, must be the nature of this stock-taking? First, we must do something about the distressed areas. This is a difficult task, because those who stand to lose the most from their ignorance of conditions know the least. The proletariat are resigned to their pitiable lot ("Who will endure"); the upper classes will do nothing to remedy the conditions; the politicians are little better than boys—they have "not contributed, but have diluted" ("Roar Gloucestershire, do yourself proud"); help must and will come from another source when the enemies of the free life—the curate, the club pro, the army man, etc., survivors of long-established institutions full of inherent weaknesses—fall, and from the wreckage emerges a new and finer life. Nor will average youths effect the change, because they are "most of them dummies". It must be the unusual youths who have not as yet become too closely linked with tradition, and can "sheer off from old like gull from granite" ("Under boughs between our tentative endearments"). They must not, for example, let themselves be deluded into thinking that the man with beautiful manners, apparently master of the situation, is really free ("Watch any day his nonchalant pauses"); because he is not. He has merely taught himself how to maintain his poise in the presence of imminent disaster. It is true that one should lend a helping hand to the man afflicted with the missionary spirit ("Doom is dark and deeper than sea dingle"); but one must do more than be his friend, or the friend of the undeveloped, or of old ladies. A life of activity is necessary, even though it be barren of honor ("Will you turn a deaf ear").

From birth to death man is harassed by distractions, desires, mistakes, and inconsequential things to the extent that in important things he "makes random answer to the crucial test". He achieves neither graciousness nor thorough knowledge ("Between attention and attention"). Particularly is this true of youth. In "Walk on air, do we?" the poet appeals to the "heart of the heartless world" to make youth aware of the eternal needs, even if it

is necessary to shock them into action; not to be fearers dreading harm, but men of courage at peace.

Because the various social groups are greatly at odds, a violent clash is inevitable. In fact, the clash will occur when a leader arises who can weld into one the diverse units desiring change. Then it will be too late for the financier, the college don, the clerics of the cathedrals, sports addicts, and others who have refused to recognize the growing unrest. Will the poet, because of his universal sympathy, have the power to avert the impending catastrophe? Will he be able to restore a normal, healthy order? Mr. Auden is sufficiently an idealist to think that he will. With the aid of his friends he will create a new society in which life will be better than under the decayed ruins of the present order. It will be society's last change; and when those who have brought it about have grown old they will study their own comments on this changed and still changing order,

Saying Alas
To less and less,

temporarily forgetting what a poor thing is man ("What siren zooming").

The disillusioning thing about the struggle for those changes which will mean permanent improvement is the inability of mankind in general to pursue an ideal after some immediate needs have been satisfied. Some become discouraged from the lack of cohesion among those striving for a new order, as a result of which the capitalists can easily dominate them ("Control of the passes was, he saw, the key"); others lose interest because the world is incredulous of their warnings, and because there is no immediate practicability to their schemes; and still others lose interest because they have received cries of opprobrium instead of receiving praise for their attempts at living up to their ideals of truth and for their refusal to follow traditional paths ("By landscape reminded once").

In spite of the disaffection of would-be allies the poet never, even momentarily, loses his integrity. Through love he has arrived not only at a knowledge of himself, but of the conditions in the world before which it is impossible to be passive ("May with its light behaving"). As he suggests to Isherwood when reviewing their

lives ("August for the people and their favorite islands") the latter should devote the services of his pen to bettering conditions, because the time is past when they can live away from an upset world—

The close-set eyes of mother's boy
Saw nothing to be done; we look again:
See Scandal praying with her sharp knees up,
And Virtue stood at Weeping Cross,
The green thumb to the ledger knuckled down,
And Courage to his leaking ship appointed,
Slim Truth dismissed without a character,
And gaga Falsehood highly recommended.

Greed showing shamelessly her naked money,
And all Love's wondering eloquence debased
To a collector's slang, Smartness in furs,
And Beauty scratching miserably for food,
Honour self-sacrificed for Calculation,
And Reason stoned by Mediocrity,
Freedom by Power shockingly maltreated,
And Justice exiled till Saint Geoffrey's Day.

The way has been prepared for them by such men as Nansen, Schweitzer, Freud, Groddeck, Lawrence ("revealed the sensations hidden by shame"), Kafka (recorded "the sense of guilt") and Proust ("on the self regard") ("Certainly our city").

As the poet tried to tell a young friend of unadventurous temperament who would accept conditions as they are as less dangerous than the attempt at altering them, all civilizations die and those who refuse to recognize the new conditions are the ones who suffer:

Their fate must always be the same as yours,
To suffer loss they were afraid of, yes,
Holders of one position, wrong for years.

("Since you are going to begin to-day")

And as he told the workers themselves: they submit to the daily drudgery for fear of getting the "sack"; but their fears are "fake" and can be dispelled. The day has passed when the workers are not important in the eyes of the world. Many ranks—including the mystic and scholar—have tried to console them, although really on the side of things as they are. But pay no attention to them ("Brothers, who when the sirens roar").

Thus reduced to the bare outlines of the 'thing said' it is obvious that the importance of Mr. Auden's message does not lie in any

practical program of reform. The thought results from a sensitive person's impact with a reality which, because of a defective social and educational system, he never dreamed existed.¹ Fortunately, however, Mr. Auden says much more than the foregoing summary suggests. In the work in which his poetic sensibility is most clearly revealed, his communication of these ideas is sufficiently powerful to stimulate in the reader a corresponding enthusiasm, awakening him to the problem to be solved. The means by which he does it is the subject of a later section of this essay.

II.

When we turn from the political to the personal theme in Mr. Auden's poetry—the theme which inspires many of his finest lyrics—we must not let our critical judgment be disturbed by the prominence of an unconventional (the homosexual) theme. With an honesty akin to that of Gide's in *Si le grain ne meurt*, Mr. Auden has recorded the history of his attempt at reaching a satisfactory emotional adjustment. I say attempt because his latest work would indicate that he has not yet succeeded. Aware of the anomalous position of the Urning in modern society he has sought by his frankness of utterance to rid himself of any guilt or inferiority. The educational system, he says in *The Orators*, is partly to blame for the many wrong types of lovers: excessive lovers of self (the shy recluse), excessive lovers of their neighbors (those who live on their nerves), defective lovers (those who have escaped from life), and the perverted lovers (those who have lost their nerve and suffer every injustice). In a later section of this work he is less general, and by the mention of one specific ability of each he vivifies the many diverse types found in present-day civilization. He gives point to this catalogue by his "summon": "And there passed such cursing his father, and the curse was given him." From a statement of the general he passes to a statement about himself. The "Letter to a Wound" (*The Orators*) details his gradual absorption in his "wound", the suffering from which increased his sensibility and broadened his sympathy to

¹In Mr. Day Lewis's novel *Starting Point* it was the General Strike of 1926 that afforded the opportunity for this impact. Anthony's political ideology in that novel does not differ widely from that of Day Lewis, Spender, and Auden.

ward an understanding of others. Who, he asks, in a moment of introspection, are our real ancestors? "The true ancestral line," he says, "is not necessarily a straight or continuous one"; his own true ancestor was his uncle, the homosexual.

Just as he is at pains to show that the ancestral line is not necessarily straight or continuous, so, too, does he rationalize his actions: the "blood" wishes, even at the cost of regret, to travel further than that of his parent. Fully aware of the attempts being made by psychologists to solve certain problems of human behavior—

And cameras at the growing wood
Are pointed; for the long lost good—

("Now from my window-sill")

the poet warns them against over-hastiness in their attempts at a cure. Because even though he and his fellows are "sick", in order to escape their probings they will act under cover ["the mole's device"], be proud ["the carriage of peacock"], and put on a brave and insolent front ["rat's desperate courage"].⁴ On the other hand, we must not think the state of the "sick" an enviable one. (The poems themselves reveal that it is not.) The poet certainly wishes for his students a normal life where they will not "have health and skill and beauty on the brain". In "The Chimneys are smoking" the poet goes one step further and makes an indirect plea for the day when the homosexual will be recognized by society, so that he—the "left-handed" ("Fleeing the short-haired mad executives")—need feel no shame. The poem is intensely personal and deeply moving, revealing the characteristics mentioned in "Now from my window-sill":

And since our desire cannot take that route which is straightest,
Let us choose the crooked, so implicating these acres,

⁴The "brave and insolent front" is noticeable in *Letters from Iceland*. At times in this volume the poet seems to seek desperately to cover beneath a cloak of studied smartness and sheer bravado a sense of guilt forced upon him by the *mores* of society. The aspect of his personality here revealed is definitely less pleasant than those aspects revealed in his other volumes. Except as a further indication of Mr. Auden's prosodic skill I do not think *Letters from Iceland* will add anything to his stature. Instead of shocking the reader, as I think he hopes to do, he succeeds only in arousing his pity that so much energy has been spent in doing something so little worthy of his talents. The book gives every indication of being nothing more than the fulfillment of a contract with the publishers. But *Spain*, a poem which lifts Mr. Auden out of himself, possesses the finest qualities of his genius.

These millions in whom already the wish to be one
 Like a burglar is stealthily moving,
 That these, on the new facade of a bank
 Employed, or conferring at health resort,
 May, by circumstance linked,
 More clearly act our thought.

With conditions as they are, it is useless to expect from the ordinary biography anything but superficial facts, and even those facts are worthless because a sympathetic and understanding interpretation of them is lacking. "It was Easter as I walked in the public gardens" and "A shilling life will give you all the facts" are important approaches to Mr. Auden's poetry because of the statement in the former and implication in the latter that only for a time can the unorthodox be forced into "conformity with the orthodox bone, with organized fear, the articulated skeleton".

As one grows older, maintains the poet in "Now the leaves are falling fast", the chances for happiness in love are fewer, and even those are impossible because of the censure of "whispering neighbors"—

And the nightingale is dumb,
 And the angel will not come.

Even from those who try to understand comes only such misunderstanding as tempts him to ask

Were they or he
 The physician, bridegroom and incendiary?

("Just as his dream foretold")

Love, after all, is an individual problem which each person must solve for himself. For Mr. Auden it is a form of escape from the insecurity of a troubled world:

So, insecure, he loves and love
 Is insecure, gives less than he expects.
 He knows not if it be seed time to display
 Luxuriantly in a wonderful fructification
 Or whether it be but a degenerate remnant
 Of something immense in the past but now
 Surviving only as the infectiousness of disease
 Or in the malicious caricature of drunkenness;
 Its end glossed over by the careless but known long
 To finer perception of the mad and ill.

("It was Easter as I walked")

As John Nower said in "Paid on Both Sides": "We cannot tell where we shall find it, though we all look for it till we do; and what others tell us is no use to us." It cannot be defined by negation ("Love by ambition"), although it is first released through a kiss ("Sentries against inner and outer"), and it is seldom successful except in stories ("The silly fool").

Numerous selections from *Poems* and *Look, Stranger!* reveal with amazing candor episodes in the love-life of an Urning. "From the very first coming down" depicts the end to a love after a year had passed and "love's worn circuit" had "re-begun". The poet, while awaiting in the country the arrival of the beloved receives a letter expressing the beloved's inability to join him. Realizing that one of them has changed, he accepts the end—

I, decent with the seasons, move
Different or with a different love.

"It's no use raising 'a shout'" is a variation on a similar situation. The end has come; nothing remains to do except to face their problem:

A bird used to visit this shore:
It isn't going to come any more.
I've come a very long way to prove
No land, no water, and no love.

That the beloved might not be too honorable is suggested in "What's in your mind". The poet muses on the thoughts of the beloved at his side—is he thinking of love? of money? of stealing? Whatever it is, however, let him not try to fool him by going through the gestures of love; rather, "strike for the heart, and have" him there. Nor was constancy the poet's great virtue! The theme of "Before this loved one", reveals that there had been other relationships before the present one; and the gratitude of the new love toward him was not only less to him than the loss of the old, but anything that happened between them would only intensify his feelings about the old love.

As a means of self-justification the poet poses a certain question: first, in "To ask the hard question" and more clearly in "Fish in the unruffled lakes". Why, he asks, is man afraid to remember that by absence of conscience, by surrender to natural desires,

and by lack of conception of duty the birds, beasts, and fish find freedom, whereas man

For atonement or for luck;
We must love our loves,
On each beast and bird that moves
Turn an envious look.

It is clear from Mr. Auden's poetry that with greater experience the moods in which he realizes the necessity for a certain stabilization of his emotional life have become more frequent. Many love-lyrics in *Look, Stranger!* have lost the pert smartness of some of the earlier poems on the same theme. These later lyrics possess a passionate intensity and beauty of diction that give them abiding worth. What is not clear, however—and it is driven home in "Dear, though the night is gone"—is the poet's willingness to follow in his private life the regimen of discipline he knows to be necessary.

The theme of "The earth turns over", one of many poems stressing the awareness of one person of another, would be impossible in a heterosexual relationship. It possesses genuine passion. The poet realizes that any attempt on his part to forward the matter brings failure. Only by drifting might it develop:

Lost if I steer. Gale of desire may blow
Sailor and ship past the illusive reef,
And I yet land to celebrate with you
Birth of a natural order and of love;
With you enjoy the untransfigured scene,
My father down the garden in his gaiters,
My mother at her bureau writing letters,
Free to our favours, all our titles gone.

"To lie flat on the back" and "That night when joy began" stress a similar emotion. In each, the relationship begins nervously and as an episode; with consummation, however, it develops into love and steadfastness. "Let the florid music praise" is metaphysical, explaining the power of the beloved's look to thwart any attempt against him on the part of the lover "unloved".

Every person in love derives a certain illusion of power from his state; he not only possesses a greater sense of being freed from himself and his surroundings, but also feels that only then is life really full of meaning. And yet, in spite of this feeling, love is not enough to meet "the flood on which all move and wish to move"

("Love had him fast"). In "Easily, my dear, you move" the poet, addressing the beloved in a vein of high purpose, expresses with even more positiveness the idea that, inspired by love, the lover can accomplish great things of every sort. Repeatedly, Mr. Auden calls attention to one phase of love; the lover loving but unloved, summarizing in "Night covers up the rigid land" much of the story:

For each love to its aim is true,
And all kinds seek their own;
You love your life and I love you,
So I must lie alone.

III.

From the foregoing exposition certain conclusions can be drawn about the subject matter of Mr. Auden's poetry. He is not a thinker in the sense that he has developed a system or a philosophy of his own. His sympathies and interests are definitely Leftist-Labor. The good he can do the cause does not, however, lie in any positive program of action. He sees conditions that cry aloud the necessity for change, and he can make us see them. A dozen "leaders" on conditions in the "distressed areas" are not as effective as one of his better poems on the same subject. He makes an impassioned plea for tolerance toward the Urning whose position in society is anomalous even though he is the product of that society. If he tends to alienate that sympathy by some passages in *Letters from Iceland*, we must remember they reflect but one mood of the chameleon-like character of Mr. Auden, an adept at presenting his own innumerable moods be they of tenderness, disillusionment, generosity, satire, defiance, inferiority, tolerance, depression because of injustice, or hopefulness.

IV.

But what of the tools by which the poet communicates these moods? And what of the scene against which he sets his characters?

Mr. Auden frankly likes landscapes in which are visible abandoned mine shafts, tumbling factories, and general signs of decay. He also likes high places. It is interesting, in fact, to recall the many poems that reveal him musing on the state of the world

from a scar, a hill, a cliff, or an upper room, all frequently at the edge of the sea. The title poem of *Look, Stranger!* reveals the many qualities of his descriptive powers. Without Wordsworth's tendency toward moralization, he possesses his ability of evoking a scene by a few carefully chosen details:

Look, stranger, at this island now
The leaping light for your delight discovers,
Stand stable here
And silent be,
And through the channels of the ear
May wander like a river
The swaying sound of the sea

Here at the small field's ending pause
Where the chalk wall falls to the foam, and its tall ledges
Oppose the pluck
And knock of the tide,
And the shingle scrambles after the sucking
surf, and the gull lodges
A moment on its sheer side.

Far off like floating seeds the ships
Diverge on urgent voluntary errands;
And the full view
Indeed may enter
And move in memory as now these clouds do,
That pass the harbour mirror
And all the summer through the water saunter.

Natural forces, frequently sentient, help to reveal the poet's mood and to key the poem:

. . . you may hear the wind
Arriving driven from the ignorant sea
To hurt itself on pane, on bark of elm
Where sap unbaffled rises, being spring. . .

("Who stands, the crux left of the watershed")

And on a different spring day he

. . . walked in the public gardens
Hearing the frogs exhaling from the pond,
Watching traffic of magnificent cloud
Moving without anxiety on open sky—

("It was Easter as I walked")

With Debussy-like impressionism in a description of lunar beauty he communicates his own harmonizing mood:

This like a dream
Keeps other time
And daytime is
The loss of this;
For time is inches
And the heart's changes
Where ghost has haunted
Lost and wanted

(“This lunar beauty”)

The first two stanzas of “Now from my window-sill” paint another spring night. The clarity of detail reflects the poet’s introspective mood of regret at his own psychical state.

Like those of Mr. Spender and Mr. Day Lewis, Mr. Auden’s figures are fresh, contemporary, and frequently biting. Cathedrals, for example, are

Luxury liners laden with souls,
Holding to the east their hulls of stone,
The high thin rare continuous worship
Of the self-absorbed;

(“Here on the cropped grass”)

and an ironic note appears in such a verse as “Climbing with you was easy as a vow” (“Fleeing the short-haired mad executive”).

Mr. Auden’s greatest achievement is, however, his remarkable ability in communicating all aspects of different emotional experiences by the perfect suitability of his prosodic form. Whether grave or gay, tender or bitter, idealistic or disillusioned, one realizes that the clothing of his thought, particularly in his later work, is the right clothing. In order to achieve this he makes extensive use of half-rhymes like lean-alone, hall-hill, strain-stone, tipped-topped. These occur in couplets (e.g. the choruses in *Paid on Both Sides*); in alternating half-rhymes, as in “To lie flat on the back”, (really a new form of sonnet); in quatrains; and in numerous other combinations, even internally, as in “Epilogue”:

‘O where are you going?’ said reader to rider,
That valley is fatal when furnaces burn,
Yonder’s the midden whose odours will madden,
That gap is the grave where the tall return;

The quatrain is put to effective use in a poem depicting a love which having begun nervously and as a thing of the moment developed into steadfastness:

That night when joy began
Our narrowest veins to flush
We waited for the flash
Of morning's levelled gun.

("That night when joy began")

The inherent sadness of those who flock to the casinos to gamble is admirably caught in "Casino":

But here no nymph comes naked to the youngest shepherd,
The fountain is deserted, the laurel will not grow;
The labyrinth is safe but endless, and broken
Is Ariadne's thread.

The short fourth line reflects the flatness, the hopelessness of the protagonists' lives. In "Easily, my dear, you move" the short sixth line of the stanza slows down the entire stanza, increasing the vein of high purpose, tenderness, and even of ecstasy. The same stanza is otherwise interesting in that instead of a uniform syllabic structure the verses vary from nine to twelve syllables, but the rhythm remains regularly four stressed:

Shall idleness ring then your eyes like the pest?
O will you unnoticed and mildly like the rest,
Will you join the lost in their sneering circles,
Forfeit the beautiful interest and fall
Where the engaging face in the face of the betrayer,
And the pang is all?

Mr. Auden utilizes repetition and the turn with admirable results. In "Look there! The sunk road winding", he communicates to us the unfortunate generation:

In legend all were simple,
And held the straitened spot;
But we in legend not,
Are not simple.

Again the short fourth verse gives a decided sense of fall, of lack of idealism. He uses repetition, too, for sketching a satiric portrait of a man who sacrificed his dreams to material success. The short verses intensify the irony, and his use in the last stanza of "spacious" to describe days that were the opposite heightens the ironic effect ("As it is, plenty").

It is natural that anyone as much interested in Norse poetry and the older literature as Mr. Auden avowedly is should use allitera-

tion"; and he uses it frequently, as in the already referred to "Here on the cropped grass":

A fathom of earth, alive in air,
Aloof as an admiral on the old rocks.

The effect of the sagas is more clearly revealed in his at times cryptic concentration, and in the imagery portraying a racial subconsciousness. Ballads, also, have exerted an influence, particularly in his satiric work. Both in poems and plays short, crisp, dry verses intensify the mood of a narrowed horizon. They also communicate the breathless rush and worry of the thought. "O what a sound" satisfies all the conditions of a typical ballad; almost similar in construction, in fact, to the famous "Edward".

"It's no use raising a shout", with its origin in the popular song, enhances the utter commonplaceness of the situation.⁴

Cried the cripples to the silent statue,
The six beggared cripples.

Mr. Auden's use of rime royal in his "Letter to Byron" captures much of the spirit of the addressee's *Don Juan*, although it is generally thinner than the original.⁵ *Spain* is one of his most distinguished prosodic achievements. The use of the refrain 'But to-day the struggle' heightens and gives point to the picture of a past, a present, and a future Spain.

But I would not have the reader think that Mr. Auden is at all times equally successful. In innumerable instances the form not

⁴Other influences may of course be responsible for his use of alliteration, a device which has never been absent from English poetry. The revival of interest in *Piers Plowman* may be one; and an even more powerful one is the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins.

⁵Further interesting metrical experiments may be found in "We have brought you" (from the "Journal of an Airman"), "There are some birds in these valleys" (*Poems*, p. 143), "Watching in three planes", "Brothers, who when the sirens roar", "Out on the lawn I lie in bed", and "O for doors to be open", with its refrain:

⁶I have said nothing of the subject matter of *The Dog Beneath the Skin*, *The Ascent of F6*, or *Letters from Iceland*. The poetry in these three volumes has none of the obscurity of *Poems* or *Look, Stranger!* In fact, it has a crystalline clarity. It is incisive, frequently genuinely funny, and often most cuttingly satiric. But in the first two it is impossible to separate Auden's from Isherwood's contribution, and I have already expressed my opinion of *Letters from Iceland*. A reading of Mr. Isherwood's *Mr. Norris Changes Trains* throws some light on the possible characteristics of his contributions to the plays. If Mr. Auden has written the poetry, it is Mr. Isherwood who has furnished many of the ideas of surprising pungency.

only adds nothing to the thought, but actually robs the idea of its force by riveting the attention on the chaotic and strange dress rather than on the idea. In other words, the form dissipates rather than concentrates the effect of the idea, and by so doing removes the experiment from the sphere of poetry.

There is little question in my mind but that Mr. Auden is the foremost of the younger group of poets in which Mr. Spender is a close second. Both have done much to quicken our senses toward two groups—the workers and the Unnings, and to point out where many of the evils of contemporary civilization lie. But one fear constantly forces itself to the surface—the fear that a lack of discipline will eventually exact a toll from the quality of their work. Both have learned from experience that for any abiding satisfaction a rigid discipline is necessary; but they seem reluctant to practise it. They should remember that the highest poetry is not a direct outpouring of passion, but a sublimation.

Mr. Auden's ideas are not so important as the way in which he expresses them. In his early work he is frequently obscure, not only because of the presence of private jokes which only a few intimates may understand, but because he oversimplifies the communication of complex experiences. He has used the imagery of psychoanalysis for the illumination of the subconscious mind and has left the uninitiated bewildered. In *Look, Stranger!*, he has expressed himself in an idiom which is clear, forceful, imaginative, and at times deeply moving.

It is, of course, still too early to prophesy Mr. Auden's ultimate position. Much that he has so far published will be forgotten, and rightly so. But there can be no doubt that the corpus of his good work, already large enough to merit serious attention, communicates the truth as he has seen it. Whether or not the communication of this truth is sufficiently universal to interest another age is the concern of that age.

by Harry Levin

SEVEN SATIRES

PENANCE FOR COCKTAILS

Empty the ash-trays,
Turn up the lights.
Winter's encroachment
Precipitates night's.

Gather the glasses,
Straighten the chairs;
Listen while silence
Climbs up the stairs.

Open the windows,
Let out the smoke.
Remember the laughter,
Forgetting the joke;

Letting our reason
Salvage our pride—
The things that we boasted,
The times that we lied.

For warm-hearted envy,
For cold-blooded trust,
For faces and phrases,
For lipsticks and lust,

For careless convictions,
For doubts that go deep—
Grant us some supper,
Give us some sleep.

by Harry Levin

MACARONI

To Master William Dunbar

Timor mortis
Lasts but a day,
But *rigor mortis*
Lasts for aye.

Timor mortis
Makes me grow bold,
But *rigor mortis*
Leaves me cold.

by Harry Levin

THE FALL OF MANCHESTER

Joshua was out in front the first time around.
We cheered so loud the walls could not hold out against the sound.

The second time around he turned to wave at us and smile.
The trumpets sent their fanfares, a new one every mile.

The third time Joshua faltered once or twice.
A hundred wise men scurried up and gave him sound advice.

The fourth time the people of the town looked down to stare.
They didn't see that Joshua was getting anywhere.

The fifth time there were a few complaints about the rations,
So Josh put on his spectacles and read some proclamations.

The sixth time the people of the town called down the boys.
They seemed to feel that Joshua was making too much noise.

So seven times with Joshua we marched around the wall,
And now we've stopped to sit and wait for Manchester to fall.

by Harry Levin

ROLLING STOCK

Slow down, railway crossing, long wait ahead.
The breaksqueak startles a breach of issuing steam.
Wire tingles, word travels, semaphores wag and gleam.
Headlight briefly defines the jittering boxcar's speed.

Serial numbers, leaky roofs, tanks articulate follow
Like leaves in the Lehigh Valley, like sands at Santa Fe.
Rockford released, Erie undid, Lackawanna led the way,
With rebates, room for forty and eight, bumping blindly hollow.

Agricultural implements, Acetone (in drums),
Window sashes, Zylonite—when shall we see them again?
With a queer little car in the rear smelling of wakeful men,
With a whiff of the ghosts of cattle the common carrier comes.

Empty and almost endless, count them if you can,
Rushing intently, so full of nothing, whence and where?
Each coupling creaking like a director's chair,
Each tie the cenotaph of a dead Indian.

In demurrage the load that came over the road lies forgotten.
Where are the crates and coffins? Where is the fuel and feed?
Has the index of production slipped? Is the grain gone to seed?
Milk sucked into sewers? Herds dropping? Hands drifting?
Eggs rotten?

Leave, then, the driedup rivers, escape the abandoned mills,
Slide through the canyons of billboard, the forests of telegraph
pole,
Leaving old elevators, crossing new bridges, passing dark ranges
of coal,
Leaving Wisconsin's unpainted barns leaning against the low hills,

The sudden bend of blue, the complex of steel and oil and fire,
The stockpens, Indiana, a backwash of silt and loam,
Michigan a rusty junkyard, Ohio a thrice-mortgaged home,
Pennsylvania an ultimate tangle of picketproof wire,

—No freight, no uniform bill of lading, no passion, no thought, no
divinity—

Rushing intently, so full of nothing, whence and where?
Only the yards to come to, and the track to take you there,
Only these two parallel lines that meet at a point in infinity.

by Harry Levin

IN THE EMPIRE STYLE

Seneca took a bath in the afternoon,
The moment the tiles in the court were beginning to cool, the mo-
ment

The sun was caught in the cypresses somewhere behind the Jan-
iculum.

Lictors loitered at corners. There was no noise in the streets.
Troops of androgynous youths guarded the milky frieze.

Buy Roman! Dacian goods and cheap Pannonian labour
Already, already that aerial raid, that submarine campaign
Invert the torch and hurry the flight of the birds of warning.
Mukden, Ceuta, Batum, Allahabad, Djibuti, Penang,
As far as to the uttermost outposts of Royal Dutch.

Have you remembered, philosopher, the dagger in the soap-dish?
Your ultimate lesson in rhetoric, please, O rentier, O doctrinaire,
O aesthete, incarnadining the lucid waters of Tivoli,
Gliding away down the drain from the Emperor's tastes, from
crowds, from
Ruthless Etruscan deities, wreathed in archaic smiles.

by Harry Levin

AETIOLOGICAL FABLE

The dark discreetly
Says to the bright,
"I fear I'm standing
Within your light,
Within your lovely, luminous light."
And it is night.

The bright benignly
Says, "Not at all.
Do sit down nearer,
And cast your pall.
Please cast your fine, fuliginous pall.
The world is small."

The dark continues,
"Ah, times are hard.
The world is worldly.
No holds are barred.
No, not the trickiest holds are barred.
We all get scarred."

The bright then murmurs,
Pressing his hand,
"It is my function
To understand.
It's woman's function to understand,
Man's to command."

"Then understand me,"
The dark replies.
"Then make me brilliant,
And think me wise.
Think me supremely, savagely wise,
And close your eyes."

And so they marry.
And since that day,
The earth is misty,
The sky is gray.
The sky's a dim, monotonous gray.
It got that way.

by Harry Levin

CONCORDAT

The truce we make, the truth we state,
By standing here to stare and nod,
To sing in deafness, smile in hate,
And kneel in pride, should flatter God.

He should be touched by our professions;
He should appreciate stained glass;
And be impressed with our concessions,
Watching the crisp collection pass.

And He should be solicitous,
And quick to gratify our whim;
And let the poor look up to us
As we today look up to Him.

by Joe Horrell

TWO SERVICES

I. SACRED

We're here a little while and then we pass on.
Oh yes indeed that's what he said
and my heart palely bled:
on a pedestal the pink frailty of flowers
sniffed with suspicion the soul-laden air
that stirred around the restless fans:
the roof pressed down upon my head
and the walls closed in
as I stood with him on the brink:
but my mind lay among the unwashed dishes
convexed in a sink.

II. PROFANE

The influence of the umlaut is operating here.
That was quite clear
and coarse chalk raised voices in the room
that urged me to take up arms
against a sea of umlauts:
how dare he make this dark encroachment on my mind
and thunder down the cadenced thought
and thus board up the only wicket:
for I could see moths feeding on a musty mind
deserted in a thicket.

by Austin Warren

THE CRITICISM OF MEANING AND THE MEANING OF CRITICISM

THE PHILOSOPHY OF RHETORIC. By I. A. Richards. New York: Oxford University Press. \$1.75. 1936.

A PRIMER FOR CRITICS. By George Boas. Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press. 1937.

Criticism is a 'kind' intermediate between art and science or, more exactly, between poetry and metaphysics. Its practitioners are sometimes artists who, in the leisure between their creative bouts, look up from their work to generalize about its presuppositions and its ends or those of their fellows and rivals; sometimes psychologists and philosophers for whom the aesthetic experience appears too important for exclusion from their system but who, lacking such an experience in any marked degree, must deduce an aesthetic theory from their theory concerning the nature of things in general.

The best criticism is the product of men disciplined in both art and science, who have a sound knowledge of psychology or philosophy and who, by their specific or illustrative judgments, show that they have experienced poetry and painting. Boas is a philosopher, Richards, a psychologist; both are amateurs of the arts as well as speculative intelligences.

The books of both are addressed to other critics and teachers rather than to sheer laymen; and both deal with considerations, and consider difficulties, which lie beyond and in back of the dogmatism and imperatives of much respectable practice.

I.

Mr. Richards' *Philosophy of Rhetoric* continues his incursion upon the 'meaning of meaning', devoting its earlier chapters to

what used to be called Diction and its last pair to Metaphor as the typical 'figure of speech'. His 'rhetoric' has this in common with that of Aristotle, Quintilian, Kames, and Kittredge,—that it is a study of communication; but, while the older theorists had in mind to instruct the orator or writer how to persuade people or indoctrinate them or move them, Richards has his attention on the reader. It takes two sides to effect a communication.

One is likely to think of ideas or concepts as central to communication; Richards pays little attention to this species of exportation. He distinguishes sharply between scientific discourse, to which exactness and fixity of language are requisite, and other forms of discourse,—primarily poetry, but including also, apparently, philosophy, the 'social sciences', and criticism,—in which exactness and consistency in the use of words are undesirable. Outside of the physical sciences, he seems to say, "neutral exposition"—the bare communication of concepts—is never one's aim: the writer desires to convey an attitude, a mood, an emotion, an idea colored or flavored by an emotion. For such intellectually impure but aesthetically and humanly rich documents, words ambiguous of meaning are best.

Richard's use of ambiguity is itself ambiguous. Sometimes a word is ambiguous when it may be taken in two or more different senses: the reader must attend to the context to decide in which. Illustrations of this are common, and rarely present difficulty. Whether 'grace' means 'ease and charm of movement' or 'God's power operative in fallen man' the context readily clears; so with 'see', which may apply literally to the operation of the outer eye or metaphorically to the inner understanding. But the kind of ambiguity he chiefly contemplates is called 'multiplicity of meaning': a word evokes a concurrence of denotations and connotations. His illustrations are drawn from Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra*; on page 64 he disserts brilliantly on the meaning of "this knot intricate", and, rebuking Dowden for supplying but a single synonym for the adjective, thus "following the fashion of his time in making Shakespeare as simple as possible", he explains that the poet is "bringing together half a dozen meanings from *intrinsic* and *intrinsic*: 'familiar', 'intimate', 'secret', 'private', 'innermost', 'essential', 'that which constitutes the very nature and being of a thing'—all the medical and philosophical meanings of his

time as well as 'intricate' and 'involved'. What the word does is exhausted by no one of these meanings, and its force comes from all of them and more."

Two comments are in order here. First, Richards tends to identify poetry with sensitivity to words and their orderings; he prizes words used with an apprehension of their near-fellows in sound and sense (Morphemes), their etymology, and the shades of meanings through which they have passed. The larger architectonic element of 'invention' or 'myth-making' or drama threatens to drop out of his reckoning.

One wonders, in the second place, how Richards can feel such assurance concerning Shakespeare's meaning. At times throughout the book, one feels that he has forgotten or abandoned consideration of 'communication'—which would seem to involve the question, How far can the reader be sure that what a book or a passage or a word means to him meant that to the writer? Old-fashioned people have always been fearful of 'reading into' a poem something the author never intended, assuming that the business of reading was an apprehension of what the author meant in the act of writing. And, we might add, if Dowden is following the fashion of the nineteenth century in making poetry (Browning not included) as simple as possible, is not Richards obedient to another, if more recent, convention in making it as difficult as one can conceive it?

None the less, much of what Richards has to say of poetry as style, as a shimmering, quivering verbal surface, is true of much poetry,—true of Milton as well as Shakespeare, true of Spenser and Donne and Keats and Eliot. As advice to the reader, it amounts to the sound counsel: remember that poets are ordinarily (even if not primarily) people uncommonly sensitive to the colors and flavors of words, aware of the past history of the word, its range of current connotations, its synonyms and antonyms, its sound, its length, that they use words maximally rather than minimally, that the meaning of a verse is not to be restricted to what can go into a prose paraphrase but includes the rhythm and imagery as well, the overtones of attitude.

I find difficulty, however, in following Richards when he assigns all forms of discourse save the technically scientific to the same use of words as poetry. Poetry, like the other arts, has a frankly

sensuous medium and aims at being concrete in imagery and personal in rhythm, though it aims also at conveying the universal through the particular, ideas through emotions. But philosophy and the social sciences purport to deal with universals, with concepts abstracted from (though not originating outside of or unconcerned to interpret) experience. They aim not, as poetry does, at giving the feeling of experience but at exposing its structure.

The difficulties of philosophical discourse are not to be confounded with those of poetic. In dialectic, it is chiefly the value-words which make trouble,—words like God, Reality, Beauty,—words used in conversation or loose discourse with as many meanings as participants. Before we can argue, we need to know what we are arguing about. Here two courses seem possible: one is to define what, during our address, essay, or book we mean whenever we use a word; the other is the atomic method pursued, in his brilliant studies of the 'history of ideas', by Professor Lovejoy; to distinguish the 39 kinds of Romanticism and the 64 kinds of Nature, alluding to them either by coined technical names or—after the fashion of reigning dynasties, secular and ecclesiastical—by their numbers. Even if we define our terms, those in turn need definition, and so on in infinite regress: and even definition does not, for philosophical terms, make communication water-tight, for this cannot totally exclude private association, private experience. But philosophy aims at the fixed, static use of words; its goal would be to have as many words as distinguishable meanings, and to have the relation between symbols and signified remain constant.

Richards, on the other hand, would assimilate most discourse to poetry; and linguistic fluidity seems to him a good. "Without these shifts [in the meaning of words] such mutual understanding as we achieve would fail. . . Language, losing its subtlety with its suppleness, would lose also its power to serve us. The remedy [for misunderstanding] is not to resist these shifts but to learn to follow them. . . We may reasonably hope that systematic study will in time permit us to compare, describe and explain these systematic ambiguity or transference patterns. . ."

These "systematic patterns" are subsequently to be furnished; the full meaning of this important passage remains obscure. The pragmatic intent I discern: it is a warning against literal-mindedness, against the school-master's view that looking a word up in

the dictionary will give one its "correct" meaning in a passage of Ruskin or Frost. "How, apart from inference and skilled guess-work can we be supposed ever to understand a writer or speaker's thought?" asks Richards, in rhetorical inquiry. If a speaker be the object of my attention, I must watch the wrinkles of his lips and forehead, the movements of his head and shoulders, the tones and rhythms of his voice, the accentuation of this phrase, the deliberate spacing of that; if I read, I must look for the corresponding indications of the author's attitude: I must ponder his words not only singly but in their company, watching them as they "interpenetrate" one another, and inferring, as sensitively as I can, the presence, degree of presence, or absence, of ironic intent or metaphorical. Mr. Richards, in short, apprehends the complex art that communication is, and seeks to arouse the "receiving end" to a superior awareness. His *Practical Criticism* has already had a beneficent effect by cultivating, in readers of poetry, the power of contextual interpretation and by discouraging that alleged reading which consists of constructing a private poem upon a theme furnished by the poet's initial citation of God, Mother, or Trees. In this book, he extends his field of operation to the essay and conversation.

II.

The philosopher, G. E. Moore, once remarked, "Why we should use the same form of verbal expression to convey such different meanings is more than I can say." Richards points out that, after long years of critical discussion, the two terms of a metaphor have, still, no technical names, and usefully offers *tenor* for the first member and *vehicle* for the second, reserving *metaphor* for the relationship: e.g., in the metaphor "Mary's tear is a watery diamond", "tear" is the *tenor* and "diamond" the *vehicle*.

Boas is even more aware that we need, for precision in criticism, a 'neutral' or scientifically disinfected terminology; and he supplies a number of words for existing distinctions as well as a number of (for criticism) new discriminations. 'Art' sometimes means the process, sometimes the product of the process; Boas assigns 'artistry' to the former, 'work of art' to the latter. He restricts art to "self-conscious, purposive, and controlled" behavior, thereby excluding automatic writing and the cadenzas of birds. More funda-

mentally, he divides aesthetic values into 'instrumental' and 'final', considering the standards of the schools of criticism as they concern one of the other species; also, more clearly than any writer I have seen, he differentiates the values of art for the artist from those derivative by the contemplator. The many distinctions lead to a highly schematized book, based upon the eight meanings of "good in the sense of aesthetically valuable." Four are concerned with the aesthetic experience as instrumental or "useful" (e.g., the moralist-communist theory of art as hypnotically transmitting doctrines, and technical criticism of artistry.) and four with the terminal or self-evidently "enjoyable". All eight are explained (pp. 26-27) as possible 'meanings' of the judgment, "*Paradise Lost* is a great poem." Boas does not pretend that his kinds of criticism exist in pure embodiment: "We are not claiming to have written an account of critical theory which will be historically true, but merely one which will have logical truth."

A glance at the respective lengths with which 'instrumental' and 'terminal' values are treated will reveal that few standards exist for the latter and that few schools of criticism are concerned with them. 'Art for art's sake' and the 'aesthetic experience' in pure isolation are—for the observer, at least—rarities. Boas ably presents the cases *pro* and *contra* artistry for artistry's sake, expressing mildly his own opinion that tolerance of "every aberration of the human mind as a unique revelation" is preferable to censoring everything unusual as insane. The rarity of concern with the 'pure' aesthetic experience shows, one might argue, not only that art began in close connection with religion and tribal mores and historical record and the adornment of the useful but that its proper use is social, that art reaches its own height when the artist works upon commission from patron or state or church, and when his artefacts serve to convey (among other experiences) devotion to the heroes of society and the saints of religion, the Commonwealth and the common God. Boas cannot so argue: the sum of what can be said concerning art as terminal is that presumably the locus of aesthetic values is located in the internal structure of the works of art (i.e., that the aesthetic response reproduces the pattern of

a stimulus³); finally, that there is no arguing about 'terminal values', since they are founded on desires. The conclusion of the matter is that what the critic "says about instrumental values is objective and binding upon others, but terminal evaluations [since they have their locus in the individual's psychological constitution, normal or abnormal] will in essence be purely autobiographical and will be authoritative only to men like himself." If I dislike Shakespeare, I can be told that most men like him, and that may lead me to try to like him, but I may say "I don't desire to be like most men" (i.e., I am not overpowered by the authority of "normal") or I may frankly find myself unable to desire what other men desire, in which case my desires remain as authentic and self-validatory as those of "most men". This sequence of argument is sound; one can only counter it with the *charge* that in some ages men exaggerate and affect their differences from their fellows,—behavior which denies them a desirable experience; or with the *faith* that a masterpiece is inclusive enough so that even those who have some particular abnormality (ocular, auditory, sexual, or spiritual) can still find, with whatever the lacks in their response, a high degree of terminal value.

Richards is chiefly (in his *Rhetoric*) concerned with the meaning of a word or a line; for Boas, the 'meaning' is habitually the *total significance* of a total artefact (poem, statue, symphony). This leads to markedly different treatments of communication. Boas nowhere denies that the reader can in some measure at least, reproduce the sense or even the sensibility of a passage from Shakespeare; but he denies that the reader can know what *Hamlet* 'meant' to Shakespeare, and does not hold the critic obligated to attempt any such imaginative reconstruction, hazardous at best. A work of art, like a mountain or Mussolini, has as many 'meanings' as there are kinds of persons and kinds of value.

This theory of 'multiple meanings' has its difficulties; and in the paragraphs that follow I shall put it in my own fashion.

III.

Once it leaves the creator's hand, the work of art, be it painting

³He adds, sceptically, that perhaps, if all associations were eliminated, there could be no terminal values; and he leaves it to the psychologists to decide between these alternative hypotheses.

or poem, assumes a life of its own: once Pygmalion's, it is now its own—and the public's—Galatea.

If one asks the 'meaning' of an artefact, one finds oneself shocked by the ultimate answer. The naïve supposition is that a poem means what its author meant by it; but in that case, what is the meaning of *Hamlet* or *The Exequy*? Shakespeare and King evade consultation; even were they in the realm of mundane existence and amenable to interview, they might well, like Browning and Yeats, be found to have forgotten what they "meant" in the act of composition. Had they provided a prose commentary upon their poems, that would, in turn, require interpretation. As Shakespeare and King have disappeared, we have no means of knowing *their* meaning,—which leaves *Hamlet* and *The Exequy* poems evacuated. This position is preposterous; and one must affirm, instead, that the 'meaning' about which one is concerned is supplied or evoked for the reader or audience or contemplator,—in which case *Hamlet* has as many meanings as readers, in which case, it has no meaning,—a conclusion equally absurd.

These positions are dialectical opposites which can scarcely be resolved by the speculative reason; but which the practical reason must reduce to a pair of methods each attended by a sceptical warning against dogmatism, a sceptical reminder that Absolutes are, save as *a priori* frameworks, unattainable by finite mind.

The search for meaning-as-the-author's leads to historical scholarship; I can never know exactly what Shakespeare meant either by a play or a single line, but I can approximate it; I can, by industry and—let us hope—imagination, build up a context, using the whole corpus of Shakespeare's plays to corroborate my interpretation of a single one; I can read the work of Shakespeare's contemporaries, dramatic and non-dramatic; I can painstakingly acquaint myself with Elizabethan psychology and physics and metaphysics, as Craig has done in his *Enchanted Glass*; I can reconstruct the physical instrumentalities of stage and audience and actors with which Shakespeare worked; I can read what books Shakespeare is known to have read,—e.g., Plutarch and Ovid and Montaigne. Such an approach, such a circling around the author, assumes that in all respects his emotions and his thoughts must have been "of his age": if it is possible for a man to escape his age, such a method

cannot catch him, or at any rate the part of him that does so 'escape'.

The second method is that of the critic. Some kinds of interpretation, at least, presuppose scholarship. The critic who regards self-revelation as the artist's end and analysis of the artist's avowed or implied disclosures as the business of the exegete can scarcely proceed without a modicum of extra-aesthetic "facts". Judgment of Chaucer's style would have no value if the reader, like Dryden, could not pronounce the verses approximately as the creator pronounced them. But there are other kinds of meaning not similarly dependent. One does not need knowledge of the Elizabethan stage and its conventions to judge of Shakespeare's suitability to the current stage, or knowledge of Elizabethan treatises on psychology to judge of Shakespeare's truth to human nature. Shakespeare's remarks anent the rabble have a 'meaning' for moderns, in a context of Marx and Hitler, as well as for students of English history and readers of Machiavelli. The critic's ultimate concern is, as Arnold used to insist, with *real*, not *historical*, estimates. That Shakespeare should be for "all time" necessitates that he should have immediate significance for many generations.

Does this mean that the classic pleases every age by virtue of the same appeal? Probably not. Not only do the shifting cycles of taste now depress, now elevate, authors of the second rank; but even Shakespeare and his compeers are admired in different ages for different things,—the "multivalence" of the artefact. "Its multivalence guarantees its capacity to interest generations of men whose milieu is very different from that of the artist who made it and if every generation can find something in it which is relevant to its peculiar interests, the work of art will be said to have 'eternal beauty', 'universal appeal', and the like." Boas speaks as though he were refuting the older doctrine of Longinus, Ste. Beuve, and the rest on the nature of "Qu'est-ce qu'un classique?"; but I should say that he is rather interpreting what they meant. The older critics were content to state the fact of 'universality' and 'eternity', (neither of which they took *au pied de lettre*); questions concerning the meaning of such a fact were reserved for the psychological and sociological experts of our own time. When Longinus asserts that "the great bears repeated examination",

that examples of great literature "please all and always", that, in respect to such work, men of "different pursuits, lives, ambitions, ages, languages, hold identical views on one and the same subject", he is, I judge, asserting nothing incompatible with "multivalence". The "identical view" of Shakespeare held by the seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries is the view that he is primate of English literature, not a particular doctrine of why he is preeminent. T. S. Eliot and Mortimer Adler, neither of them to be suspected of undue relativism, both expound the doctrine that the masterpiece appeals to varying "levels" of sensibility and intelligence, *cuique suum*,—a doctrine which might be called that of *concurrent* (as distinct from *historical*) "multivalence".

Theoretically, an artefact has as many meanings as contemplators; but practically, men are types as well as individuals, participate in a common humanity as well as enjoy a 'complex' or an idiosyncrasy: the element of overlap is large in the responses to many artefacts, approaches the apotheosis of 'universality' in a few.

Each of the chief kinds of criticism is in search of one kind of value emanating from a work of art: and Professor Boas—in his brilliant little book styled, after the philosopher's modest wont, a "primer"—has clarified the nature of aesthetic judgment by disengaging some of these principal kinds, by elucidating the difficulties, and by scrutinizing the assumptions of each. With acumen he diagnoses biographical criticism, the Crocean theory, the psycho-analytic, impressionism, aestheticism, the criticism of 'ideas' mediated through art,—moral, with the Humanist, sociological with the Marxist. Croce he castigates; of psycho-analytical theories he has some sharp questions to ask; but, consistently with his theory of multivalence and his conception of the artefact as a gatherer of accrued meanings, he does not undertake to acclaim a 'correct' method of criticism.

The chief and very considerable usefulness of the *Primer*, an equivalent to which I do not know, lies in its dispassionate analysis of critical 'kinds': it is, in effect, an invitation to critics to clarify their intentions, their assumptions, and their methods.

by Charles I. Glucksberg

CARL VAN DOREN

SCHOLAR AND SKEPTIC

MR. CARL VAN DOREN may be called the dean of American critics. He has reached the age where he can watch the ebb and flow of contemporary thought with a benevolence born of understanding. For he has personally witnessed the emergence and extinction of many literary cults. While the members of the younger generation are acclaiming the latest innovation, he sees in his mind's eye the patterns of recurrence in man's history on earth, he recalls the excitement of former literary revelations and revolutions and how they vanished leaving not a trace behind. Kenneth Burke, for example, has discovered the sovereign virtue of skepticism as a specific intellectual remedy against frozen dogmas and false verbalizations, but Mr. Van Doren has been skeptical all his life. Skepticism is his native element. Unlike some of the younger critics who employ skepticism as a means of asserting their superiority, he is skeptical because he is so profoundly aware of the relativity of the values for which men are willing to fight and, if necessary, to die. Doctrines and dogmas pass away, but men and women and their perennial problems remain, and it is the plight of the individual that interests him most.

Mr. Van Doren is as difficult to catch and classify as a live Tartar. Behind his quiet, ironically smiling exterior and deft weave of words lies a mind as firm and vital as any on the left front. With him, however, insurgency is never a matter of words or moods or emotions; it is controlled invariably by reason and by the historical sense which sees that the crest of the present moment is but a wave-like configuration in a vast surging mass of motion and time stretching back infinitely to the past and reaching forward infinitely to the future. Hence he is not surprised or shocked by the radicalism of current American literature. It is but the culmination of a long line of tradition. The significant

writers of the past had many of them been revolutionaries—Emerson and Whitman and Thoreau and Mark Twain, each in his own way, had contributed his share to the liberation of our native literature. In a speech Mr. Van Doren recently delivered, he declared that literature resembled agriculture in that it constantly sought for new ways of getting at the subsoil which is the source of creative strength. Though the theme of industrial exploitation is a powerful and legitimate one, it is not a new process. It has been going on from the beginning. Not that proletarian literature is lacking in originality, but that literature like life is rarely original.

In this connection one recalls how on a public occasion a spokesman of the younger generation arose to introduce Mr. Van Doren; how he declared with a glib attempt at humor that he had officially buried Mr. Van Doren as a critic a number of times, but that each time he arose from the dead, refusing to stay buried. When Mr. Van Doren arose to speak, there was a hush. Each one wondered what he would say in reply to this apparently playful but ungracious sally. Tall, the large rounded head with its monkish tonsure and firm thin lips and face impassive as a statue of Pharaoh, he stood gazing with composure at his audience; then he simply said that during a long career he had witnessed the demise of many a young hopeful who had predicted that Carl Van Doren would soon be among the ghosts of the departed. There was no malice in the tone or in the words, neither was there any pretence at humor. It was irony unsheathed, sharp-edged. He would not engage in personal controversy, but he soon made it felt that he was not to be trifled with. Let these youngsters kick up their heels and deem themselves unhaltered stallions. He would look on with a tolerant and decidedly encouraging smile. In the end, however, he would judge them, not by their theories or good intentions or their manifestoes, but by what they had produced, and their work in turn would be judged by its degree of vitality. Hence there was something of a parable in the speech he then delivered on the necessity of a nation aspiring towards that greatness of thought and deed, on which can be built a tradition of legend and song.

Despite his detachment and his professed disinclination for work, Mr. Van Doren has been unusually industrious, if one is to

judge by the bibliography of his published writings. Recently his autobiography, *Three Worlds*, appeared. We see him as lecturer, professor, journalist, editor, and friend. He has been literary editor of *The Nation* and *The Century Magazine*, he has edited an anthology of modern American prose and written introductions for a wide variety of books, he has produced a distinguished biography of Swift, he has contributed numerous articles and book reviews to various periodicals. Besides that, he has published books of criticism and a collection of short stories and a scholarly work on Thomas Love Peacock. Yet when the sum is totaled, his contributions seem less impressive than they actually are. The reason for this is that he has fallen between two stools: he has been neither a simon-pure, fact-finding professor of research nor a free and adventurous creative spirit. On the one hand, he has been held back by his devotion to fact, his belief in the continuity of historical development, his faith in the essential discipline of research. He has completed such valuable sourcebooks of information as *The American Novel* and *The Contemporary American Novel*, both of which are pioneering works. But they are far from being criticism of the first order. On the other hand, his critical articles, his reviews and essays are competent in workmanship, cool in temper, shrewd, conscientious, incisive, but without personal force or passionate conviction. He has never let himself go because fundamentally he distrusts the play of emotions. Yet it is only fair to say that he loves life too much to be leashed by the chain of logic; he has too ironical a contempt for arbitrary reason, when unwarmed by the fires of faith and experience, ever to yield himself completely to it. His mind is essentially that of a satirist, but it misses fire for two reasons: he cannot hate with abandon nor love with enthusiasm. So that the final impression is one of fine disdain, of a calm ironical personality wearing the mask of a spectator who feels deeply and thinks clearly, but whose utterances are invariably kept within the bounds of strict logical discourse.

As if to be forearmed against contemporary or posthumous misunderstanding, Mr. Van Doren has taken pains to paint a portrait of himself under the significant title, "The Friendly Enemy". About 1914, he tells us, he had taken the rash and seemingly unprofitable step of specializing in American literature, but unexpect-

edly it proved a bonanza. There was a call for critics as well as historians, and he soon became one of the guild, though somewhat surprised at the turn fortune had taken. After translating a play by the German dramatist, Hebbel, he wrote a biography of the humorist Peacock, for which he received his doctorate. Lest we give credit where credit is not due, he informs us that "in his recent specialism Mr. Van Doren has been less a critic than a minute historian, working dustily with editorial spade and plow to pile up the mountain of monographs known as *The Cambridge History of American Literature*. Out of that he was happily permitted to salvage and enlarge certain chapters and to call them *The American Novel*. Had he been still solely a professor he would doubtless have ended his narrative with 1900, perhaps with a curt epilogue upon the newer novelists." One cannot help commenting upon the strain in which this autobiographical essay is written. He is self-effacing and depreciatory, and his mordant gibes at the academic mind are at the same time an indirect announcement that he does not belong by temperament or inclination to the professorial tribe.

Fortunately he was saved from academic dry-rot, becoming one of the editors of *The Nation*, and he seized his opportunity to write *Contemporary American Novelists*. His journalistic essays, sketches, and reviews were then reprinted in a collection, *The Roving Critic*. These articles rise above the ephemeral because the author has succeeded in sloughing off the extraneous, the non-essential; he has probed to the heart of each book and revealed its underlying problem, its universality, the type of mind that produced it. In this, as in his other critical writing, he is impersonal and objective. In 1924, while conducting *The Century Magazine*, he published *Many Minds*, a series of portraits of his contemporaries. His portrait gallery includes figures like Mary Austin, George Ade, E. W. Howe, Robert Frost, Stuart P. Sherman, Santayana, H. L. Mencken, Carl Sandburg, Lardner, and others.

With this volume of criticism completed, he turned his energies to the art of fiction. *Other Provinces* was the first, and seemingly last, fruit of his experimentation with the short-story form. A collection of short stories told with tempered beauty, their interest centers chiefly in the studies of character; to this both plot and

action are subordinated. In the introduction he tells us that his work as a critic—that is, as a student of men and women in books—had been a kind of preparation for his creative venture. All literature, he feels, is primarily the expression of a man. He cannot hide himself or disguise his true being. And this is also true of the story teller. Characters are projections of their creator. Behind every book of fiction or criticism he detects the author. Having grown tired of authors who offer material that is too luminous and too explicit and being restrained by the conventions of his craft from speaking outright, he has decided to fix his gaze directly upon men and women. The stuff of life, the materials of fiction, he declares, have always concerned him most. In short, he derives more pleasure and profit from spending time with people than with books. "At the same time, I have not undertaken to tell stories, but to present characters." And this is its central weakness as a book of fiction: it is a series of discursive essays, reflective analyses of other people seen through the temperament of the author.

His efforts as a story teller having failed, he went back to his first love. In 1930 he published his biography of Swift. There is ample reason why Mr. Van Doren should have been attracted to Swift as a subject for a biographical study. Here was a powerful satirist whose outraged scorn of mankind was held in check by a cynical knowledge of the ways of the world. Here was a man who had been molded by experience and curbed by reason. He had learned the lesson of caution in a society where unrestrained passions consume and destroy. It is a work of exacting and thorough scholarship, but it tells a story and reveals a personality. Mr. Van Doren avoids the pedantic ostentation of listing a detailed bibliography, though he has consulted all the available sources "during the period of almost twenty years since the book was first projected."

This was followed by two critical studies, one of James Branch Cabell and the other of Sinclair Lewis. His enthusiastic admiration of Sinclair Lewis is understandable, but that he should have selected Cabell, the arch-romancer, the poet of irony, the novelist of illusion and pity, the stylist of beauty, for high praise is specially significant. Cabell, we are assured, is a classic and *Jurgen*

is destined to live. This, coming from one not given to long-range predictions, is a mark of great favor. Though Cabell has perceived the essential vanity of human life, he has portrayed its aspirations and entanglements of desire with an energy that makes his imagined world real. For if one is gifted with irony, Mr. Van Doren declares, his fictional universe will be seen as logical, consistent, artistic, and unified. Here is the rare combination of vitality and skepticism, of irony and rapture, that Mr. Van Doren enjoys.

His next book, *American Literature, An Introduction*, is a synoptic survey, expository on the whole but with a number of sound and salient critical judgments. The most interesting chapter is the last, called "Critical", which deals with contemporaries and which hazards a guess as to which of the moderns will outlast the age. Finally, one must mention his *Modern American Prose*, which represents his selection of what is wittiest, most beautiful and true and enduring in modern American literature. As an anthologist he is chiefly concerned, in his method of selection, with narratives and studies of character, for the reason that "Always and everywhere telling stories and creating characters are the central function of literature." In the "Epilogue" to the volume he again ventures to predict which of the twentieth-century figures will survive, but he does so with the caution, typical of the historical critic, that as long as time flows a reputation is never safe. Names pass and are revived. The great are humbled, the obscure and lowly exalted. "Books survive only when they turn out to have the power to speak to new generations after them. What books will do that depends on what generations are to follow." This is a favorite axiom of his, but it is not altogether a true one. What the future will choose to approve is in a sense unpredictable, but there is a law of averages to consult, a provisional norm of excellence to follow. Just as an actuary can roughly compute when a man will die, though he will of course be wrong in individual cases, so can a critic approximately estimate the survival value of a work. For human nature does not change so radically as to warrant a complete reversal of those criteria by which one generation gauges excellence. There is a continuity of tradition, there is an underlying human norm, and Mr. Van Doren would

be the first one to acknowledge it. Mr. Van Doren's prophecy, however, is significant as a personal confession of his likes as well as of his critical sagacity. He lays his wager on "dark horses" like Henry Adams, Mencken, Dreiser, Cabell, and Sinclair Lewis. For those who are left unmentioned he makes no apologies, except to end with the epigram: "In literature the first writers are first and the rest, in the long run, nowhere but in the anthologies."

II.

Mr. Van Doren feels that he has, on the whole, been singularly fortunate in his career. He speaks of his "discreet methods", and the phrase aptly describes his critical tactics. He is impersonal, preferring to stand behind his work. The subject of his criticism is the real protagonist, not the victim. The function of criticism is not to attack but to reveal the underlying pattern of meaning in those authors who presumably are important enough to warrant criticism. "Intending to exercise no craft but that of sympathy," Mr. Van Doren declares of his own practice as a critic, "he turns the documents of his author over and over until he has found what he believes to be the central pattern. This is the chief delight in criticism: to find a pattern where none has been found before . . . His business with the problem ends, he thinks, when he has made it clear to the limit of his capacity. He leaves to other-minded critics the fun of habitually pointing out what meanings, what patterns, would be better." This sums up his creed as a critic: to find the fundamental clue to the work, to trace it home, to explain it, and then stop, without venturing to portion out praise or blame.

Though Mr. Van Doren has specialized in American literature, he has a steadfast perception of the cultural continuity which binds together the history of literature, past and present, foreign and native. Actually "this home-keeping specialist and punctual journalist", as he calls himself, most enjoys reading, not the moderns, but classics like Euripides and Lucretius, Montaigne and Socrates and Fielding. He has criticised the most oddly assorted array of figures in American literary history with urbanity and insight, always coming "as close to their designs as any critic can

decently be expected to come. He would, however, be one of the promptest to admit, what he has had enough critics to point out, that he is singularly, if not fatally, non-committal." But he is more than impersonal and non-committal; he is singularly limited in the range of ideas he has encompassed. In his scrupulous pre-occupation with the pattern of the author as evidenced in the work, he has failed to body forth any basic principles or convictions with which his name and books could be identified. One is interested in the critic, in the mind that interprets, as well as in the diagrammatically accurate and faithful interpretation he may supply.

In self-defence against the charge that impartial interpretation virtually amounts to praise—to the question, "Has the roving critic no prejudices, no principles, no causes? Is he a critic of many minds and therefore a man of none at all?"—he replies that he is nakedly revealed—features, moles, mind, and all—in his work, that a pattern is there discernible. Is it not evident, he asks, that he prefers to discuss authors who are civilized, who possess a skeptical and lucid and ironical intelligence? "Viewing the general life of mankind, its dim history, its shifting manners, its tangled aspirations, as a thing which is, for the artist, both raw material and fair game, Mr. Van Doren looks particularly in an author for the mind, the rational conception of existence, by which he shapes his matter." Whatever the quality or temper of the mind—be it that of a Vachel Lindsay or a Carl Sandburg, a Santayana or a George Ade,—he will not say that one kind of mind is superior to another, but as for himself he can only sympathize with a mind that is rooted in reason, not one nourished on the soil of superstition and tradition. For him a great character is one who is ardently loyal to a reasoned ideal. "On the whole," Mr. Van Doren continues, "he is more insistent upon the reasonableness of the ideal than upon the ardor of the loyalty. He does not greatly trust impetuous surmises or mystical illuminations." His faith, sober and tested, is based on experience, the historic wisdom and empirical reason of civilized man as he overcomes blind passion and controls brute instinct. Reason is the goddess he worships, and even her with a reasoning questioning skepticism.

What saves Mr. Van Doren from a spurious rational ab-

stractionism, is the test he applies to all art, not only whether it is good and true and beautiful, but also whether it is alive. This, for him, is the fourth dimension in criticism. Literature is either dead or alive, and it is the amount of life a work contains that makes it destined to endure. "Neither creator nor critic can make himself universal by barely taking thought about it. He is what he *lives*. The measure of the creator is the amount of life he puts into his work. The measure of the critic is the amount of life he finds there." One is quick to notice that Mr. Van Doren seems to deny the critic any creative power or purpose. Aside from that, what is not fully satisfying in this conception of criticism is the very canon of vitality. It is, after all, relative and variable. What is alive to one man is dead to another.¹ What Mr. Van Doren discovers as admirable in a George Ade or a Cabell may to a differently constituted mind appear as dull and stodgy and feeble. Life is a vague metaphor, no more than a word. The touchstone of vitality must first be defined. Of what does vitality consist? Is it emotional illumination and ecstasy or intellectual energy controlled and disciplined by the reason, or both? When Mr. Van Doren counsels us to keep our attention fixed upon the primary substance of art—"the stormy passions of mankind, the swarming hopes, the noisy laughter, the homely speech"—he brings us no nearer to an understanding of the literary quality we must seek to find. Roughly speaking, what Mr. Van Doren would have us do is to subordinate artifice to art, form to passion, technique to the dynamic stir of experience. In his eager search for native writers, Mr. Van Doren has tended to overlook artistic merit for the sake of the presence of vitality. As a result, he has often been indiscriminating in his judgments.

He candidly admits that the critic must possess more than unqualified sympathy. Some authors obviously deserve to be attacked and exterminated. But Mr. Van Doren would rather remain silent than heap ashes of fire on the head of the enemy. Not

¹These objections were put down before the writer had access to Mr. Van Doren's autobiography, *Three Worlds*. In it Mr. Van Doren makes the following significant confession regarding the fourth dimension: "What did it really mean to insist that a book must be alive? How could you tell whether it was or not? These questions I did not answer, and I still cannot answer them. What is alive to one reader may be dead to another."

that he is too proud to engage in controversies or chastize the offenders. He is simply averse to wasting his time upon undistinguished, second-rate authors. But where history is in question—and he regards himself as an historian primarily—he plumes himself on his courage. Had he not eliminated the unworthy names in the history of American fiction? Had he not lifted up his voice early in the movement to restore Herman Melville to his rightful place as a writer? Moreover, as an historian he is not interested in the speculative void of metaphysics. "He undertakes only plain jobs with definite materials." Facts and facts alone are the materials with which he works. His prime function, he insists, is to make available to the layman information that will help him make up his mind about various authors. "The truth of the matter is, Mr. Van Doren practises one branch of criticism to the exclusion of several others. - That he is little perturbed by his limitations, that he does not greatly care to rise to passion or to descend to prejudice, means, in part, that he is more wilful in his behavior than sometimes appears. It means, also, that criticism has never been with him a major aim. What really interests him is human character, whether met in books or out of them, and it is always human character which he studies."

Mr. Van Doren thus conceives himself as the interpreter *par excellence*, offering expositions of human nature, as found in books, out of which evaluations arise. He is a mirror, not a sword. Not his to attack or obtrude his individuality, his critical apparatus. He is impersonal, almost anonymous, and he deliberately cultivates a coldness of tone, a severely intellectual atmosphere, without intense sunshine or thunderstorms, where all is rarefied and serene and reasonable.

III.

Oftentimes a man's strength proves a serious weakness. Human nature is a delicately adjusted system of checks and balances; what it possesses in abundance in one direction is countervailed by a deficiency in another. Lack of vision is compensated by an acuity of auditory and tactile perception. Myopia, as in the case of Lafcadio Hearn, renders one enormously sensitive to the indefinable aura of a place, its floating atmospheric effects, its colors

and fragrance and shadowy outlines. Mr. Van Doren has been gifted by the gods with a powerfully controlled reason that manifests itself in a style that is simple, direct, epigrammatic, seasoned with the spice of irony and skepticism. Because of his reasoned mistrust of intellectualism, of abstract theories and philosophical systems as well as of ideal enthusiasms, the emotions of romantic excess in general, he has fallen lamentably short in two respects: he has produced no rounded, no comprehensive book of criticism, and his work as a critic has been restrained in tone, neutral in tint, limited in range, fragmentary in nature. He has relied on reason to a point where reason inhibits, if it does not prevent, that largesse of utterance, that generous expansiveness and intensity which appears when one writes with the full sincerity and fervor of deep convictions. His substance is austere impersonal and therefore largely devoid of individuality. He prides himself on his painstaking search for facts, but the scholarly "truths" he has discovered, while valuable, lack significance of design. His books are really collections of discursive essays and reviews; they are offshoots of industrious moments, the fruits of editorial assignments, the product in many instances of enforced literary labor. He has given birth to fragments, which are isolated, uncorrelated; they possess no perceptible unity. The only traceable pattern is that of their creator, disguised as a brain working aseptically to produce stained-glass slides which under the magnifying lens of his style show the cellular structure of the character of the work or writer under discussion.

His dismissal of philosophical criticism with its implied contempt for abstract theoretical speculation arises from his consistent reliance on the historical discipline. Nevertheless, there is evident a touch of astigmatism in this abhorrence for general ideas. To renounce philosophy completely in the province of criticism is as bad as the excess of those who scorn the earth of concrete facts for daring leaps into the vast empyrean of thought. For facts, however necessary in historical research, have no value if not related and joined together to form some significant pattern. Admittedly no valid conclusions can be arrived at before all the evidence is in, but once the facts have been gathered then the task of synthesis and evaluation begins. Now no synthesis, no evaluation, can be made without fixed points of reference, without some

fundamental philosophical outlook. The philosophy need not become all-important; it need not occupy the center of the critical stage, but it must always be implicit, present like a Greek chorus in the background. Indeed, Mr. Van Doren frequently falls back on some general system of values—now relativism, now ironical skepticism, now reason, now historical continuity and the concept of vitality—but the trouble is he refuses to acknowledge it openly and include it as an element in his critical armory. Mr. Van Doren's insistence on the *fact* would seem to indicate that he has been more deeply bitten by the aspic of research, the *raison d'être* of which is the fact, than he would probably care to confess.

Ultimately, then, criticism reduces itself to a question of the philosophy of life held by the critic. This philosophy is implicit in his judgments and embodied in the literary values he advocates. His philosophy in turn is conditioned largely by his temperament. Thus the method employed by a critic is often subjective in origin and import, however objectively it is stated. Now if one is soberly realistic, disillusioned about himself and mankind, seeing both victory and failure as equally meaningless, he can have but little to say to his generation. At least, most of what he says will be stamped with the mood of disenchantment. He may act as a restraining force, a check on the romantic excesses of enthusiasm or idealism or sentimentality, but he is powerless to initiate action, he cannot stimulate faith and enlarge the horizons of vision. He is rarely to be found at the forefront of a movement, in the thick of battle. He has no message either for the arduous or the hopeless ones of earth. He sheds light, but it is a cold searching skeptical light of reason, without emotional warmth or chromatic glow. He is Sancho Panza, not Don Quixote, the Swift, not the Shelley or Hazlitt of American criticism. His satire, however, is without the bite and bitterness of a Swift, because his perception of folly and futility is touched with affection for mankind. It is tolerant, amused, in its kindly forbearance. To one whom little, if anything, greatly matters, criticism must remain essentially an art of exposition and analysis, rather than creative affirmation. All things considered, Mr. Van Doren's estimate of himself is, perhaps, eminently fair. In a strict sense, he is not so much a critic as an historian, and it is as an historian of American letters that he has made his most important contribution.

by Blanche Colton Williams

GEORGE ELIOT:

SOCIAL PRESSURE ON THE INDIVIDUAL

INQUIRING into ourselves as tested by our predecessors, Dr. H. V. Routh states, in *Toward the Twentieth Century* (Macmillan, 1937), that the true sign of Victorianism "was spiritual isolation, not intellectual fellowship." The Nineteenth Century, he asserts, does not stand for "any widely established and widely accepted set of doctrines and principles, or even ideals", as did the Thirteenth or Eighteenth Centuries. Trollope and George Eliot were contemporaries, Spencer and Newman. The century provided the weapons wherewith we today, who lack a spiritual aim or goal, break our images. In his chapters on the Victorians he shows how each failed: Tennyson, for example, begins as prophet and ends as craftsman; Arnold begins as artist and ends as moralist. Illustrative of Nineteenth Century modernism, Mill, Spencer, and George Eliot represent the Victorian quest for a new romanticism, "founded on experiment and logic", and all three betrayed a new limitation in that "they take no account of the labyrinths and abysses of individual consciousness." Though the point is of little moment here, I differ: I see George Eliot succeeding where he sees her fail. So far as the romantic heritage of the Victorian age is involved in this discussion, she is of course the apex of the novelists of a new romanticism based on experiment and logic. Everything she wrote illustrates that effect results from cause: we reap what we sow. To illustrate this doctrine she presents what she calls mixed human beings, "In such a way as to call forth tolerant judgment, pity, and sympathy." How did she come to exemplify this doctrine? How and why are her characters as they are? Why was the author herself what she was and what she became as a result of social pressure?

Upon George Eliot, the woman, pressures are of three distinct periods: the twenty-two years at Griff House, on the Newdigate

estate; second, the eight years in Coventry; third (first phase), the few years in London before her union with George Henry Lewes, and (second phase), the almost-quarter century of her life with Lewes.

Chief among the forces affecting the girl at Griff were the social orders of the English caste system, the educational and religious impacts, and the scientific awakening. Quite early, Mary Ann was forced to recognize her place in the middle of the social strata. If she walked into Astley churchyard, she saw carved upon the tombstone of her father's first wife, the words "friend and servant" of the Newdigate family. She compared the ladies at Arbury Manor with her mother's sisters, whose peculiar limitations are celebrated in Aunts Glegg and Pullett; she compared her father, to his advantage, with young Newdigate. If she needed help in crossing a pool of water, she gave herself pick-a-back to young Jakins; he was of the lower order, to be commanded. Robert Evans was a member of the Church of England, whose tenets he did not question. But Mary Ann's Aunt Samuel was a Methodist preacher; John Wesley's influence was quite strong. Though molded by orthodoxy, Mary Ann was impressed by the godly life of Aunt Samuel; never could she forget the story of Mary Voce's child murder, or that Aunt Samuel had comforted the girl the night before her execution. Power of church, established or non-conformist, of Christianity in any phase was great. Marian was all for good works, sublimation of self and, though later she discarded the historicity of Christ, never could she discard the effect of Christianity.

Stamped by religion, she was stamped by education in Greek language and culture, German philosophy, English literature, mathematics, music, the new science. The first sewing-machine, the first railroad, the first steamboat to cross the Atlantic—a world of inventions crowded upon her consciousness. At the end of twenty-two years, however, the impress of religion was deepest.

At Coventry, she found the Brays and Hennells, who had thrown off the orthodoxy that made a zero of earth and an infinity of hell or heaven, and who substituted for the old orthodoxy the religion of service to humanity and a new appreciation of earth. Comte's positivism succeeded Marian's first religion, and her growing soul

was impressed by advancing scientific and sociological experimentation. So far as her writing may be foreshadowed, in the spirit of literary prophecy backward-looking, obviously she was to reflect the teachings of Comte superimposed upon the teachings of Christ. Her three-year translation of Strauss's *Leben Jesu* and the death of her father completed the second era of what has been termed "pressures".

In London, she met the literary figures hovering about John Chapman and the *Westminster Review*, her contributions to which are signs of what she might become and did become. I discount the influence of Herbert Spencer, except in so far as it continued that of Bray and Comte. Then came Lewes, and the rest of her life responded to a deeper awareness of social problems bound up with her own life or problems of society in the mass. The immediate demand upon her was service, help for her own family, help for Lewes's children. She wrote her novels to meet that demand, first, because she loved Lewes and wished to confirm his belief that she could write them; second, she wrote for a number of justifications. The most popular way was that she chose; by it she answered the challenge of society, spoken or unspoken, at times felt acutely, a pressure she could not ignore.

In recapitulation, the pressures were the fixed social orders, the orthodox religion, the Methodists, Comte's philosophy, the development of science, the praise or blame of her fellow-men and, more particularly, her fellow-women. Later, were the continental experiences, already begun with Lewes in Germany, experiences in France, Spain, and Italy, all of which pressed upon her intellect, to strengthen and deepen, all of which influenced her novels; there were labor problems, and there was the racial problem, which had also the effect of enlarging her sympathies.

It will be remembered that Lewes was afraid she might not be able to write dramatically. And, in truth, her characters are more memorable because of what they think and are than because of what they do. Yet drama is in their lives, as it was in her own life, because routine strikes an obstacle and soul constancy or soul change brings about a climax. The externally two greatest climaxes in Marian Evans's life were her refusal to continue church-going and her step in joining Lewes without benefit of

clergy. Daringly revolutionary then, these steps were the logical expressions of climaxes resultant from inner conviction and growth. The routine lives of her important characters, likewise, are broken by dramatic incident or climax, away from which further development is obvious, though the change, progressive or regressive, is but the outer manifestation of inner preparation.

Living in London, Marian had become a sophisticated woman. She appreciated fully her Warwickshire folk, but to make London, the world, value them, she was aware she must invest them with color, feeling, atmosphere and that to do so, she must become the creative artist. Life had given her material; reading and writing had trained her; literary pressure and social pressure of the metropolis contributed the *savoir faire* which, through her genius, fused the elements.

At the outset, she turned to those early pressures and to the lives of clerics she had known at Chilvers Coton, Nuneaton. The climax in the life of Amos Barton's dull, stodgy soul is the death of his wife, bringing with it the realization, "I did not love thee enough." Her churchmen are weak in humanity, except Dr. Irwine of *Adam Bede* and Dr. Kenn of *The Mill*. Yet the author was not bitter in presenting the foibles of the English clergy; her sympathy excluded bitterness. And in Mr. Gilfil she created an apology for the warped lives of clergymen who in losing love had lost all that makes life worth living, an apology for men good in the grain but full of knobs and excrescences. On the non-conformist side, she created Mr. Tryon, whose service of charity in Milford affected another life shaped by routine, that of Janet Dempster. The early pressures are also reflected in the contrasts between the humbler members of society and the Cheverels of Cheverel Manor, in the recognition, for example, that Captain Wybrow might not consider marriage to Tina, but by the social law and order must marry Beatrice Assher. It would be interesting to know what George Eliot would say about recent events in England. . . .

In *Adam Bede*, she wrote from nostalgia for the days of her youth. Adam, as everybody knows, is almost a perfect portrait of her father; Dinah Morris is a combination of Aunt Samuel and Marian Evans (all her chief women reflect their creator); Arthur Donnithorne is drawn from young Newdigate. Dinah serves

through love, pressed by the need of those poorer than herself, as Aunt Samuel and Mary Ann Evans had served. Adam learns experience through the sad episode with Hetty and his happier love for Dinah; he emerges, as Professor Osgood puts it, "adjusted and authenticated." Hetty and Arthur, neither of whom contributes to the good of society, are punished. They reap what they sow, and reap through society as constituted.

It has been asked whether George Eliot believed that, having sinned, she had been rewarded past all whooping by love and fame and, to offset the irrational sequence, wrote about men and women who more logically were rewarded or punished. The answer is an emphatic no. Marian Evans was sure she was morally right in her union with Lewes, as a lesser woman would have feared herself wrong. Marian knew that her influence was stronger for good than if she had done nothing to disturb the conventionalities.

In the partly autobiographic *Mill*, which followed *Adam*, the climax in Maggie Tulliver's life results from her passionate desire for knowledge, understanding, love, in conflict with ideals of personal renunciation, sacrifice for family, ideals of loyalty, ideals gained from those early pressures that shaped George Eliot, or aided in the shaping. Had Maggie been full-grown of stature, she would have stood by Philip Wakem, but she could only pity him; she was not strong enough to do more than surrender him. When Lucy's lover, Stephen, turns to her, she finds—she thinks—all she craved and, for a moment, succumbs. At the instant of climax, old duties and loyalties win. Too late, however, Maggie has chosen; she wrecks her life, a wreck from which only death saves her.

Silas Marner, an offshoot from a larger task, presents a man ruined through unjust social pressure, restored through the healthy influence of normal human beings. If society can kill, it can also cure.

The literary pressures of the day, if I may continue to hammer on the topic word, through the first three novels, were clearly those of Thackeray, in the gnomic sayings and satiric observations; of Wordsworth, in the humble lives, and emotions remembered in tranquility; of Scott, in the romantic plot—compare, for instance, the plots of *Adam Bede* and *The Heart of Midlothian*; and of Lewes, in the scientific spirit and allusions.

All her noble characters reflect the promise, "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Romola is saved by helping others. Pressed by the intolerable pain of her domestic life, Romola left Florence but through the advice of Savonarola returned and in subjugating self found herself. Savonarola could not save himself. He preached the altruism which, because of his overmastering ego, he could not wholly practise. Romola practised what he preached. She was plastic to the impression of his own die, which he could not use upon himself. As for Tito Melema, he is the famous and perfect illustration of the weak soul destroyed by external pressures.

Here I wish to recall that *Romola* marks a division in George Eliot's works after which adverse critics see her regressing in artistic power, after which her admirers see her progressing to the end, or to *Theophrastus Such*. In either alternative, the remaining works illustrate a pressure more cosmic, one of which the author was consciously aware, one to which she reacted with enlarging sympathies. She had begun with provincial England, she had continued in a foreign land in an age remote. In *Felix Holt*, she returned to England and to labor problems, and had to conclude that the world was not ready for her reformer; social pressures were too strong for his success. In *Middlemarch*, for me the zenith of her novels, perhaps because it is not too narrowly perfect, she opposes the forces of selfishness, meanness, hypocrisy, pettiness, and other flourishing vices, against unselfishness, sweetness, honesty, and magnanimity. Here her study of social influences impinging upon men and women is perhaps less doctrinal, more subdued by the triumph of the artist over the moralist. If in this novel, George Eliot's creativeness still is circumscribed by "exemplary sentiments", they are not so oppressively illustrated. One can read *Middlemarch* without reflecting, "cause and effect; reaping and sowing." If in the earlier novels she staked, as Dr. Routh maintains, "her sense of reality and of human dignity on the study of cause and effect", surely in this creation she left something, left much, "to the creative spirituality of her readers". Rarely does one think of Casaubon's reward or punishment, or Dorothea's or Rosamond's: they are as they are; they live, suffering or enjoying in their own ways, and their contacts with others are comparatively dissociated from moral conclusions.

Finally, in *Deronda* and in the poetic drama, *The Spanish Gypsy*, the author reveals that other races had magnified the effect of pressures already endured. Of course, the *Gypsy* came earlier; already George Eliot was swept out of her island setting and its problems when she created Fedalma, in a modern version of the Christ story, with the semi-apotheosis of one woman, instead of one man, urged by the social need. The Christian influence was still working, though tempered by the doctrines of Comte.

In 1933 I was passing by the gate of George Eliot's last home, in Chelsea, and read on the gate a note to anti-Semitic effect. If she, whose charity and sympathy were boundless, had read those words fifty-five years earlier, she would have been sorely grieved. Fortunately for her life-work, she did not live to know contemporary Germany. Her heart went out to the Jewish people and their hope of founding a new Jerusalem. Again, desire for justification is evident. Since she had turned from formal Christianity, she felt compulsion to illustrate the suffering and fortitude of the people that had denied Him. For many, *Daniel* is a failure; for many, it is her best work, her climax; but all who believe with her friend and contemporary that "a man's reach should exceed his grasp" must applaud her effort. Sympathy for the individual has surmounted race and become sympathy for another creed, another people.

Today, it is possible for us to understand the extent to which George Eliot broke with tradition and why she broke, keeping the best of the old and seeking the best from the new; the extent to which her fine capabilities balanced the heritage of romance from Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats, from *Vanity Fair*, *Villette*, and *Wuthering Heights*, with the *Social Statics* of Spencer, the *Logic* of Mill, and the philosophy of Comte. And the more we understand, the more we shall praise her honesty, courage, and sympathy, greater not despite but because of her feminine malleability to the impressing stamp. In summary, she humanized the dawning scientific spirit (Lewes was the strong influence there); combined reason with emotion, and presented reward or punishment as dependent upon the relations of cause and effect. If she became too mathematically exact in meting out effect for cause, she buttressed more surely her addition of logic to romanticism, an addition most desirable.

by Arthur E. DuBois

AMONG THE QUARTERLIES

THE *New England Quarterly: An Historical Review of New England Life and Letters* is one of the most carefully edited of serious-minded journals. It is well printed and proof-read. Its articles are carefully written and, despite their learning and confinement to New England themes, varied. Within the limits of what it appears to try to do, it is an excellent organ.

Its review section, especially, has character: character deriving from the personnel of its reviewers, from the number of reviews (twenty-four in the December issue), and from a nearly exclusive attention to books about New England. One knows, in a measure, what to look for here. There is little of the appearance of hit-or-miss in the handling of books because the section-editors have a thematic guide in their selections of books to be reviewed.

Yet *The New England Quarterly* will set no North River on fire. In fact, one can imagine a New Englander being quite as happy and proud a Yankee if the *Quarterly* devoted to him should not appear tomorrow. Probably its editors would be the chief mourners. And this contemplation seems to me a sad one. It seems too bad that such a journal, if put upon a little list, would not be missed more widely. The reason is worth looking for, since presumably most learned journals would not be more missed for the same reason. In Chicago at a convention of the Modern Language Association recently, for example, learned men in English were as loud as proper scholars ever are in saying that they had too many journals.

All of the articles in the December *New England Quarterly* are curiously finished. They begin and end completely in themselves, raising and settling their own problems except perhaps for the rare specialist who has rare knowledge or prejudice about one of them. Cuthbert Wright tells the inside story of how Alston never

finished the ambitious painting "The Feast of Belshazzar". It all happened before 1843; the canvas seems to be in some cellar now and wouldn't have been missed if somebody hadn't gone poking about. Edmund S. Morgan reviews "The Case against Anne Hutchinson". The original judgment was rendered in 1637 and the case has been closed at least since the Dreyfuss trial reopened.

Fred Harvey Harrington investigates some "Literary Aspects of American Anti-Imperialism", an important, live topic. But he is interested only in the years 1898-1902, and believes, mistakenly, that, so far as literature was concerned, anti-expansionism became a lost cause in 1902, Hamlin Garland being able to recall in 1936 "only dimly . . . that we regarded the United States as quite large enough for our civilizing activities." One is not without suspicion that Mr. Harrington, at least in his present company, would not have opened his mouth about anti-imperialism if he had not believed it died in literature about 1902. After all, a scholar must be right, and nobody can be right about the living.

Hermann F. Clarke reviews the career of "John Hull: Mint-master". The unlawful New English mint which made the pine-tree and other shillings was discontinued before 1683 when Hull died. George Pomeroy Anderson answers the question "Who wrote 'Ethan Allen's Bible'?" It was not Allen alone certainly, but whoever it was (mainly Thomas Young) probably died before 1800 and the *Oracles of Reason* (short-title for the "Bible") was still-born in 1784 except for a kind of artificial Bacon-Shakespeare-Junius-Letters-controversial kind of existence. George C. Grace reviews the career of a temperamental minority leader and jack of many interests, "Benjamin Gale". This fellow died in 1790, thoroughly.

Max I. Baym writes about "William James and Henry Adams". These are still live personalities. But, though his article is mildly illuminating, it changes no natural opinion concerning either and is devoted exclusively to marginalia by Adams on James's *Principles*, beginning and ending with them as they, beyond repeal or need of it, begin and end with themselves.

Charles William Cole notices "Jeremy Belknap, Pioneer Nationalist" who nevertheless did not render unnecessary the propa-

ganda of Lowell, American-Scholar Emerson, Whitman, and others.

These articles are static. They are dead. Life does not settle most problems: only death does. *The New England Quarterly* deals with settled problems or it enlivens ghosts for a while in order only to lay them. Unless one has special prejudices or information, when one finishes these articles one has no interest in them left. One has seen the dinosaur skeleton in the museum—that is enough—one does not want to take it home or apart.

Critics or historians are not expected to be artists. But they might be expected sometimes to be useful to others than their own kind. Museums, to be sure, are useful, but not so useful, I think, that a journal can afford to engage all its scholars in museum work. Two articles only in this number have anything approaching current or general appeal: Baym on James and Adams; Harrington on Anti-Imperialism. The second of these is short-sighted, and the first devoted to marginalia.

Anyway, it is intriguing to imagine an artistic historian. Somehow I am reminded of Poe's reasons for adding the last two stanzas to "The Raven". Before, the poem had been static. Read, it had nothing left for the reader to go on with, as from the dinosaur to the mastodon in the Museum: it was like Saturday-Evening-Postings—after all, nothing can be done about "they lived happily ever after." The added stanzas were intended to bring the poem home to stay. In them the raven no longer keeps its bill to itself but sticks it in the heart forever. To be sure, this development is hardly more than a literary trick, duplicated by writers often as when Longfellow's Paul Revere becomes a perpetual alarmist for America in time of trouble.

But perhaps historians, if they do not want to lose their public to economists or columnists, need to be trickier and add a couple of stanzas to their deathsongs so that their tense becomes not exclusively past but perfect. For, though life may be a show, it is not exclusively that of the museum or of the circus of freaks which the museum resembles because of the rarity of its dinosaurs. It is pleasant occasionally to remember that once a horse played "Home, Sweet Home" on the piano or see it done again in a cir-

cus. But for the most part the horses we have to manage must yet run races or draw loads.

As a matter of fact, however, it is probably history-as-it-is-written, not history-as-it-might-be-written, that is tricky. The historian is caught between irreconcilables. Whichever ones he champions make him a liar concerning life which fosters all irreconcilables, and these irreconcilables include conflicting aims for history, neither of which is perfect in tense.

These notions are suggested by a review of Baker's *Woodrow Wilson*, vol. VI., conducted in the *Winter Virginia Quarterly* by Dexter Perkins who says:

To understand those war years one must think oneself back into them, and it is a sterile interpretation and a sterile critique of them which ignores this important, this fundamental, consideration. By the same token, it is a perverted view of history that leads to a depreciation of the fame of Woodrow Wilson. Woodrow Wilson was denied the wisdom that is granted to the bright young men of today. He lived in a real world of twenty years ago.

Well, twenty years is a long time, and most of the things he fought for then now seem futile. Which, after all, should be the concern of the historian, the causes or the effects of an error? Which is the juster measure of a man, the reasons for him or the influence of him? And which is history, the describing of an error as truth because it happened and can be explained or the definition of an error as an error?

Though solely for purposes of discussion, grant that the causes are more important than the effects of a policy or a personality, that the job of an historian is pluperfective. Looking back, the historian still perverts what he presumes to recreate and photographically preserve. For as soon as an event or personality is seen whole, from a distance, it seems different from, and much more plausible than, what it seemed when conflicts were over-stressed. Similarly, a corpse looks different from its living original because in life nobody was ever so still, his job never so done; and therefore, also, truth is stranger than fiction.

In Wilson's time it seemed as though Germany and militarism or democracy and peace must fail. Nowadays, likewise, it seems as if tomorrow there will be only Democrats or Nazis, Fascists or

Communists. Conflicts seem complete now that will be apparently incomplete tomorrow—waxing Capitalism destroyed only irrelevant phases of waning Feudalism; the rest is with us still—the conflict was incomplete. Representing incomplete conflicts, things as they turned out rather than things as they seemed, history accordingly distorts the past it aims to recreate.

Also, history makes things more plausible. Seen in all its ramifications of cause and effect, sequence and consequence, an event seems to have been inevitable. Seeming inevitable, everything seems to have been inevitably right—history whitewashes its best villains. So, now, it is possible to say that acting on public opinion and other forces Wilson could not have avoided war. But, as a matter of fact, in 1917 as now, no event, even war, seems unavoidable.

History, accordingly, is a romanticizer, especially when it aims at what Professor Perkins recommends. Made more plausible, the past seems therefore tragically better than the present, and we become hopelessly poor livers. This romanticizing is trickery, no less perverted, no less sterile than the “wisdom that is granted to the bright young men of today.” In fact, it is precisely unprincipled. It makes fun of our wisdom or ignores it. And so, history becomes that static we have mentioned in the broadcasts of our historical journals. The past becomes completely an end in itself: a worshipful Utopia. Wilson! What matter what the past tense makes of him? The present tense warns us that the prospects of new wars in behalf of democracies are not now confined to Polish Corridors.

Meanwhile, of course, principled history also over-simplifies. The German and the American looking back on the World War with differing ideologies come to differing conclusions, both relative falsifications of what happened. But out of the clash between those ideologies is a better recreation of events than the impersonal historian can manage. At any rate, history is a live force; dynamic, not static, if its practitioner actually believes in the ideologies he represents whether he wants to or not.

One suspects that the static quality of academic history indicates but one thing and that the boast of being unprejudiced is a defense-mechanism for that very thing—out of fear or caution or laziness,

the modern historian does not know what he believes. The writing of history for him is a matter of keeping his hands busy as if he were working cross-word puzzles not to have to think, and the meaningless past serves him quite as well as any other past. If this suspicion is well-founded, one understands why academic historians are in their hearts jealous of Harry Elmer Barnes and why Harry Elmer Barnes has no academic job. Errant though he may be in details and journalistic in phrases, Barnes writes perfective history! Shades of Gibbon!

II.

In the Winter *Virginia Quarterly*, William G. Peck discusses "The Decline of English Politics". He says the English have lost interest in politics because their major parties have become relatively indistinguishable. The characterlessness of English parties, he thinks, results from their common failure to face the vital problem, the break-down of Capitalism. Fascism or Communism, accordingly, have unusual opportunities.

An Anglican clergyman, Mr. Peck does not say that unless we socialize our gains we shall have to socialize our losses; that as we cannot or should not by conquest extend our foreign markets we must develop our domestic markets by lowering prices, raising wages, and stabilizing the ratio between them. In fact, it is doubtful if he faces what he regards as the basic problem any more courageously than contemporary English politicians. He finds,

Outside the boundaries of official politics new ideas are stirring, neither Communist nor Fascist. There appears, too, to be an awakening Christian intelligence, entirely unwilling to accept the situation. The only hope is that the forces of creative and humane sanity will accumulate with sufficient rapidity to reshape our public policy before the storm breaks. It may even come to pass that to England, which a century ago led the world upon the high road to a morass, will be given the task of discovering another and better road.

"The Decline of English Politics" is a kind of sequel to the more challenging "Democracy and Human Purpose" by the same gentleman in the Autumn *Virginia Quarterly*. In this article, Mr. Peck anticipates the socialization of gains and points out some of the consequences of that process. But he insists that no demo-

cratic institution or nation can be efficient unless it preserves the human being as an individual, not a cog in a machine, and unless therefore it is reinforced by Christianity. Mr Peck's major thesis comes to be that, wanting any "transcendent interpretation of our human situation, making money or government (rather than human welfare) a primary end, democracies have failed—they have not fostered, as Christian theocracy might, the humanization of government."

For the State, posed as the human absolute, is bound to discover itself and its own preservation as the supreme human end. At the same time, religious or cultural forces which may procure unity between men of various nations, must be pronounced of epiphenomenal provenance when one absolute State decides that its interests demand the overthrow of a rival State.

Disillusioned concerning capitalistic democracies, Mr. Peck, however, is still more fearful of totalitarianism. On the one hand, "relying upon their myth of a dialectic process already obsolete before the proletariat had heard of it", Communism "carries out, in a more doctrinaire manner, the assumptions of capitalism. In its actual control of men, it regards them as means to an end in which human personality is devalued." On the other hand, as surely as Communism, Fascism and Nazi-ism

are built upon the deliberate attempt to drive below the level of human consciousness that universal element in man which makes him a person. And it is only out of personality that genuine society may be achieved.

and

Thus we have observed the curious spectacle of populations politically enfranchised in equality, but regimented in economic strata; and we have seen that the requirements of economic order have assumed a dictatorship over the whole social and cultural sphere.

Accordingly, if it is to survive meaningfully, democracy must be redefined as essentially Christian, a theocracy of some sort.

It is our argument that democracy is the true political implementation of the Christian dogma of man. . . . In the first place it must be made plain that democracy cannot be implemented

upon purely secular and positivist assumptions. For it implies a certain mysticism and a certain dogmatic, relating man to the infinite. It is very difficult to see how the absolute denial of democracy can be sustained without an implicit rejection of the Christian dogma of man. Whether we are asked to accept as ultimate for the social order the decisions of politicians, soldiers, technocrats, or poets, or of some solitary Dictator cloaked with clouds of fantasy, we are asked that the vast majority of men shall submit to direction and control from a source extrinsic to their personalities. And that. . . is an attempt "to solve the problem of human life by denying that men are human." But the assertion of the essential autonomy of the person implies "the primacy of the spiritual" in human nature. It means that the only final end to which a man may rightly address his powers is transcendent, and that in politics and economics he is dealing only with a realm of means. If, therefore, democracy cannot be denied without the rejection of the Christian dogma of man, it is also true that democracy can never be accomplished without that dogma.

Mr. Peck is a sophisticated, well-read, shrewd person. But apart from his identification of Christianity with democracy—I believe Fascists and Nazis have made similar identifications: Christ has been called a Communist, and Japan is sufficiently theocratic—certain questions seem not to have concerned him so realistically as Fascism and Communism have.

(1) Does Christianity as we practise it tend to preserve the human or even the humanitarian? Probably the last place in this country that a person would go to for exercising his personality in free inquiry concerning, say, truth would be the forums of our churches. I seem to remember that many of our worst wars and massacres were done in the name of practical, expansionist Christianity. The Crusades, the Inquisition, Salem witch-trials are only the beginning of a long list of infringements of churches upon sovereign-human rights. I seem also to remember the strange case of the Archbishop of Canterbury vs. Edward Doe, not important in itself but certainly a dramatization of positive church tendencies. Certainly no Christian church representative preserved in history has been notably humane toward a potent "minority critic".

(2) Does Christianity as we practise it promise to relieve us of war? Certainly in theory and to a large extent in fact, most wars have been waged in the name of ideologies. In this coun-

try now, the Spanish Civil War is being fought between Fascist or Catholic and Democrat or Communist, sometimes even between Protestant and Catholic ideologists. I see very few Anglicans shaking hands with Roman Catholics (page the Irish!). Few Protestants fraternize with either without condescension. Within the Protestant ranks, what Presbyterian does not think a Christian Scientist deluded and a Lutheran benighted and a Methodist emotionally upset and a Baptist mad? And of course pagan Chinese or Hindu or Jew crosses the street many times a day to avoid the practising Christian humanist, the barbarians!

In short, I see no signs I can read of a Christian-humanist Internationale, wanting which paraphrases of Mr. Peck's warning must be in order:

For the Church, posed as the human absolute, is bound to discover itself and its own preservation as the supreme human end. At the same time, political or cultural forces which may secure unity between men of various nations, must be pronounced of epiphenomenal provenance when one absolute Church decides that its interests demand the overthrow of a rival Church.

(3) Has the Church proved itself efficient ever to preserve human rights, spiritual or material? This question has been implicit in others. But it seems to me the inefficiency of practised Christianity in politics or economics has been thoroughly demonstrated throughout the Christian world, in New England, Spain, England, Germany to mention no more. Churchmen have liked to thrive on ignorance, their own and their parishioners'! They seem to have taken pains to be backward by a century or so. They have proved singularly inept in civil matters from Bohemia to Merry Mount, and singularly "personal" in human relationships. As a group throughout history, they have allied themselves on the side of reaction until changes were made. In the name of Christianity, they have martyred their progressives!

History provides us with no Christian totalitarian State that has proved efficient to implement its dogmas. Contemporary maps locate no totalitarian theocracy not now beset by dangers Mr. Peck worries over: Capitalism, Fascism, or Communism. It is not as though institutionalized Christianity had never had a chance!

(4) In fact, is not the general tendency of Christianity a de-

humanizing one when it affects society? For necessarily Christians believe that the good life for the human being here is of little consequence beside the good life for the angelic being there and, accordingly, preach and practise a kind of Job-like philosophy, not at all Christ-like, concerning our social ills.

In short, personal liberty seems to be menaced, at least until Christians become Christians, by any form of totalitarianism. I would as soon trust my social future to, and take the standard of my social responsibilities from, a bureau of practising lawyers as from a bureau of practising Christian clergymen. If the latter bureau were made up of Franciscans and I was a Jesuit, of Presbyterians and I was a Covenanter, of Methodists and I was a Baptist, certainly I should run and hide, especially in the North, South, East, or West. For the lawyer might want my property, but the clergyman would want my property *and* my *body and soul*.

Other questions will doubtless occur to most readers in a country subscribing to religious toleration. At any rate, it is an amazing experience to turn from Mr. Peck and "Democracy and Human Purpose" to Thomas Jeffries Betts and "The Generals 'Dilemma' " in the same number of the *Virginia Quarterly*. One reads "What else can be done to revive war as an art and science?"

Of course the *Virginia Quarterly* cannot alone be held guilty of irresponsibility, especially as we do not know what obligations it assumes when it invites a review. Army authorities, I understand moreover, commonly talk of "the art of war and the science of tactics".

The stupidities of the High Command in the World War have long ago been made sensationally apparent; in fact, Mr. Betts develops the thesis that war has gotten too big for the generals. Apart from the question of genius, however, art has always seemed to me a peace-time occupation, dependent on peace and preserving it. In an ironic mood we can afford perhaps to contemplate with DeQuincy the "Fine Art of Murder". But when we remember the power of words, how approval of base things is ritualized in calling them nice names—under these conditions we will find it hard to excuse any editor, especially one who professes Christianity or Mohammedanism, for not blue-pencilling "the art of war".

Expressing under- and over-privilege, war is the great de-

humanizer, beside which the menace of "capitalism", "communism", or "fascism" and most of the promises of "Christianity" or "democracy" ring empty. War shows that men have guts, eh? Yes, commonly by ripping open their bellies! And that is art?

III.

The Autumn *American Scholar* published a brilliant article by Datus C. Smith, Jr., called "A Plea for Unprincipled Education". Its thesis is that if we are to have mature education and responsible probings for truths, universities as corporations must refrain from moral or other pre-judgments called "high principles" and from the moral or other coercions of faculty members which such prejudice occasions. Academic freedom, Mr. Smith points out, becomes an issue chiefly because administrators commit themselves and their universities to a point of view subject to question or amendment. The specialists, presumably, are likelier to be right or well-tempered than the administrator.

The primary function of the scholar seems to me to be the understanding, translation, promotion, and preservation of a special knowledge. Since all legitimate knowledges have to do ultimately with human welfare, all knowledges converge into opinions on public policies, social or moral. And on these policies every citizen, even a college professor or administrator, is entitled to his own opinion and to the privilege of acting upon it within his legal rights.

So long as a specialist approaches these policies honestly and responsibly from the peculiar methods, materials, and purposes of his knowledge, he is within his academic rights if even in the name of the university he goes beyond the academic corridors to act upon his convictions as he must do with other citizens if he marries, puts children in schools, pays taxes, or votes. To keep a professor always thinking, to deprive him of his right to act on his convictions by any form of discriminatory legislation emanating anywhere, is of course to deprive him of citizenship. Academic freedom is, after all, freedom. And the proof is partly in the fact that those who do most to keep the professor pure in his academic halls are the first to charge him with being over-theoretical, an impractical idealist, a Brain Truster.

The primary function of administrators, it seems to me, is to protect their professors of knowledges from the ignorant, the prejudiced, the privileged, the self-interested and unprincipled, who surround colleges as parents, alumni, local big-wigs. But, curious as it may sound, the administrator has an equal right to personal conviction and liberty of action with his professors—not to fire the professor for voting, but to vote another ticket! Of course the administrator can hardly help exercising undue influence because in the matter of promotions or of hiring new men all the advantages are on his side. Yet the responsible administrator will realize that his personal and official duties or opinions are not exactly identical. And within the university he will act only professionally, realizing that one of the healthiest Harvard departments of philosophy included Royce, James, Santayana, with only one of whom could he possibly have agreed,

Most disasters to academic freedom that I have heard of seem to have happened because, for whatever little reason of self-interest, administrators and faculty alike have wanted confidence in each other and because, not having talked matters over, they have lacked knowledge and rendered Guilty-verdicts without trial. There is a healthy friction, a natural counterpoint, between the heads and bodies of anything: it becomes a rash only when one or the other, as in Spain, is dis-eased. The broken-out, discordant want of confidence and of knowledge I refer to in universities seems always to have originated in a common lack of faith in disinterested knowledge. The fault has by no means been always the administrators', though heads of universities do often act like little Hitlers. The university in general has been slow to defend itself against the amateur, against all of us who are amateurs outside our own fields, against all of us parents, alumni, and neighbors who are amateurs especially in the social sciences and philosophies.

Maybe the university has gotten money by its want of faith in itself. But I suspect that it has lost respect that might otherwise have been due it; and therefore it has also lost money. We know only too well that universities are not disinterested. Especially in the social sciences there is consequently nobody to whom we can confidently turn for even proved half-truths. The words "neutral" and "unprincipled" are detestable words, suitable for jelly-

fish. I believe the scholar should not only propagate but also propagandize his knowledge. Nevertheless, Mr. Smith seems to have defined a main cause of academic impotence.

In all discussions of this sort, however, there seems to me to be a good deal of unrealism. We talk about a kind of ideal university. Yet, remembering the laws of Massachusetts and certain facts about Harvard brought out by Mr. Smith, remembering the Jerome Davis case at Yale, where shall we find it in this country? "Academic freedom"!—perhaps our difficulty is less with knowing what "freedom" is than with knowing what the "academic" is. And what on earth do we mean when we talk of "disinterested" persons, supermen? amoeba? And how does what we say ideally apply to the hundreds of denominational, rustic colleges committed to belief in varying "truths" and to programs for propagating them? Shall we simply take from them the name of "college" or "university"?

Any educated person must speak or act in the name of an institution only with great caution when the principles or consequences of his action derive from or belong to another knowledge or technique than his own—a lawyer ought to count ten before he operates on his daughter for appendicitis. He must do so to prevent himself from making a fool of himself as the clergyman is apt to do when he legislates on art. Academic freedom is, after all, "academic". Any person who acts upon specialized knowledge will be "a radical" if he is creative, because "radicalism" is in the very nature of "creation" even in theology to surpass the old.

It seems to me the mistake small colleges make is in requiring only one course from their professors and showing little faith in that. Science taught as theology is hardly science. If the theology is so ill-founded or so uncreative that science cannot be taught because it would undermine theology, then obviously theology is badly taught—the fault is not with science—or it is uncreated, not even a half-truth. The specialist with faith in his own knowledge need not worry about what other professors teach. The denominational school, accordingly, should be content with required courses in their "theology" and give their other professors the same liberties for pursuing truth and happiness that they would

enjoy in undenominational schools. The need everywhere is confidence in specialization, even in specialized religion!

The unprincipled person seems to me a monster. Either he believes in nothing, and must be a poor teacher. Or else he believes what he is expected to believe, and is uncreative. When most persons talk of disinterestedness they seem to mean one of these two things. And the person who boasts of being "disinterested" is commonly the antiquarian who is keeping his hands busy with curiosa in order not to think, or the second-rate man trying to keep a first-rate man down in the name of "discipline". To me, the "disinterested" person is he who considers himself less important than what he stands for, considers himself only an agent of what he professes, and who would therefore like a martyr sacrifice himself before he would compromise his profession.

What, then, is "the academic"? It seems to me we use the word legitimately in three senses. First and best, "the academic" is the disinterested handling of a learning: the knowledge and its principles are bigger and more important than the particular time or occasion of their application. Second and worst, "the academic" is the handling of learning that never will have any bearing upon occasions of time or place.

Third, "the academic" is the resting upon knowledges and practises which are common property. Any teacher must be academic at times in this third sense because his job is partly to hand down to his students the possession of these common knowledges. The main fault of literary and other historians seems to me to be that they are unnecessarily academic in this respect. An artist remains academic if he never succeeds in going beyond the exercises he was taught in school, never finds himself beyond a commoner. Many English teachers do, I know, go beyond their exercises in their thinking. But when they publish in their own journals, somehow they revert back to their school-personalities, and the results are common-place exercises. The reasons have been suggested, and the consequences are partly that they seem academic in the second and worst sense.¹

¹The last part of this paper was written before I had seen the unequivocal championship of complete academic freedom made by the late Ogden Mills in a letter to Meredith Blagden published in *The Bulletin of The American Association of University Professors* (XXIII, 670-673). Mr. Mills would have given

Meanwhile, who is unprejudiced? (1) the clergyman who favors a theocracy? (2) the academician who favors freedom? (3) the major who talks of the art of war? (4) the scholar who writes static articles in order to "stay put" in his professional chair? (5) the person who boasts of being disinterested and does nothing or loses himself in museums where he can do nobody any harm? (6) the weakly Republican who favors freedom for fear of suppression? (7) the poor Democrat who favors oppression for fear of freedom? (8) the legislators who impose loyalty oaths or the teachers who resist them or the teachers who take them? (9) the church-school administrator who requires his faculty to be churchly or the social science scientist who, knowing he will be fired, turns radical? (10) the tolerable editor of the SEWANEE REVIEW who publishes me or his intolerable critics who would know better? Who wants to be unprejudiced?

even the most radical of professors the benefit of doubt for fear of jeopardizing freedom. His only limitation upon liberty of free inquiry and speech in universities was that outside interests should not predominate over academic duties. This limitation seems entirely reasonable, providing of course that salaries are full-time and that the suspected professor be tried by a jury of his peers. As Mr. Mills pointed out, more harm is done by suppression than is likely to happen from free discussion.

by Maurice A. Moore, Jr.

TASTE

TIDES IN ENGLISH TASTE, 1619-1800: A BACKGROUND FOR THE STUDY OF LITERATURE. 2 vols. By Allen B. Sprague. Harvard University Press. 1937.

Talk what you will of taste, my friend, you'll find
Two of a face as soon as of a mind,

sang Pope in one of his imitations of Horace, and this same view is echoed by Dr. Johnson and Browning, to mention no others. During the last ten years or so there have appeared numerous books and articles in learned journals on the manifestations in literature—especially English literature of the eighteenth century—of this complex and elusive phenomenon of taste. The enormity of the subject as it affects both literature and the arts is brought home most forcibly perhaps in Professor John W. Draper's valuable *Eighteenth Century English Aesthetics: A Bibliography* (1931), which lists approximately a thousand items (books, treatises, articles, etc.); yet even this formidable array is incomplete, for various scholars have added pieces overlooked by Professor Draper. A complete bibliography for this century alone is still a desideratum, especially of the items in newspapers and periodicals, as Professor R. W. Babcock so eloquently demonstrates [PMLA, L (September, 1935), 922-926].

At least two of these articles on taste deserve cursory mention. Glib generalizations about literary preferences in the early and mid-eighteenth century received a rude shock when Professor R. D. Havens's "Changing Taste in the Eighteenth Century; A Study of Dryden's and Dodsley's Miscellanies" [PMLA, XLIV (June, 1929), 501-536] showed, among other things, that during the first twenty-five years epistles, satires, pastorals, religious and philosophical poems were rare, but that the 1716 edition of Dryden's *Miscellany* included many of the best pre-Restoration poems; also that the period from 1748 to 1758 was one of wavering uncertainty, for though neo-classicism was being rejected as too rigid and narrow no new discipline had yet been found to take its place.

Indeed Professor Havens concluded that the poetry of the mid-eighteenth century shows relatively few traces of medievalism, ballads and sonnets, love of gloom, or beauty of nature except in its cultivated and obvious aspects. Mr. E. N. Hooker [PMLA, XLIX (June 1934), 577-592] emphasizes the futile attempts between 1750-1770 of such aesthetic critics as Hogarth, Hume, Burke, and Reynolds to establish a standard of taste which would be universally applicable.

Now comes the late B. Sprague Allen's erudite and scholarly study of the fluctuations in English taste during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. His scope is much broader than that of any of his predecessors. To quote his own words: "I have taken a corner of a vast field and discussed the most conspicuous phases of taste that developed in England between Inigo Jones's Banqueting House (1619) in the classic style and the close of the eighteenth century. The interval is obviously important because it witnessed the rise of classicism in art and in literature and its subsequent conflict with such romantic phenomena as Orientalism, Gothicism, and the rococo. Unfortunately, limits of space made the inclusion of music, painting, and sculpture out of the question. The book nevertheless constitutes a unit, as it embraces architecture, gardening, and arts that are most closely allied to them." (I. viii). Though his work is well documented and shows very wide reading, even the "corner" he has chosen for study is too extensive to allow more than a relative handful of illustrations from the poetry, prose, and drama of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Unfortunately, too, he has apparently overlooked Draper's bibliography, as well as the books and articles on taste mentioned above (cf. also the annual Restoration and Eighteenth Century bibliography in the April numbers of the *Philological Quarterly*). Nor is any mention made of the influence of science (i.e., the Newtonian world-machine) on the development of such classical ideals as symmetry, order, proportion, harmony. Because of this last oversight, perhaps he is inclined to exaggerate the influence of Shaftesbury's sentimental ethical theory. Nevertheless he has given us the first consistent and thorough-going study of the interrelations between art and literature for this period. And it is a synthesis that was sorely needed, for specialized studies in both fields have poured and continue to pour from the press in bewild-

ering profusion. To the present reviewer, therefore, the chief value of Allen's work lies in its demonstration that the art and literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are conditioned by the same emotional and intellectual forces and thus exhibit common characteristics.

Rejecting the conventional dichotomy of the literary historians as illogical, Mr. Allen regards the period from 1500 to 1800 as an intellectual unit in the history of ideas. With one or two notable exceptions, English architecture during the Elizabethan and Jacobean period remained fundamentally medieval, despite superficial ornaments in the classic style. But from about 1650 to 1750 Italian classicism was in full flower, thanks chiefly to the work of Inigo Jones, Palladio's disciple, of Sir Christopher Wren, of such elegant amateurs as the third Earl of Burlington, and of such influential writers as Evelyn, Addison, Pope, Steele, Shaftesbury and his followers. Yet we must remember that the praise of classical architecture was by no means universal, and it was being continually attacked on social and economic as well as artistic grounds. The rise of the formal garden presents essentially the same phenomenon of praise and blame.

In fact the spirit of anti-classicism never completely died out. Notwithstanding the strenuous and often violent criticism of the classicists, the popularity of Oriental chintz, porcelain, lacquer, wall paper, and furniture increased steadily from the early seventeenth century on, and was the earliest of the "romantic" tendencies which finally undermined neo-classicism (Professor Lovejoy wrongly thinks the revolt began with gardening). Marked interest in the Gothic appeared somewhat later, but the disproportionate attention given to Walpole, Gray, and the Wartons has obscured the earlier work of the antiquaries in preserving past traditions; for this reason the term "Gothic Revival" is meaningless. Lastly came the influence on interior decoration of the rococo with its love of s-and-c-shaped curves, which was originally a reaction against the symmetry and straight lines dominant under Louis XIV, and which appropriately flourished under the frivolous and pleasure-loving courts of the Regency and Louis XV. Designers frequently employed rococo, Oriental, and medieval elements in the same room or on the same piece of furniture. As Mr. Allen remarks, "This fusion of decorative ideas separated in time or

space marks the uncertainty of taste in the middle decades of the eighteenth century when romanticism was developing into a conscious hostility to the Renaissance". (II. 106). However, it is significant that the taste for Orientalism, Gothicism, and the rococo which possess common qualities of design: asymmetry, movement, variety, freedom, spontaneity—all diametrically opposed to the classic ideals of regularity, sobriety, repose, discipline—synchronized in the eighteenth century. Some of the most curious and lively chapters in Mr. Allen's book trace the vogue on the continent in the middle of the century of the English natural or landscape garden, the "sentimental vagaries of the 'furor hortensis'", and the widespread hostility to this fashion.

Up to about 1760 literature and the arts followed parallel lines of development, but in the second half of the century, except for their common interest in the Middle Ages, they pursued divergent paths. While literature became more and more "romantic", the discovery of Herculaneum and Pompeii and the subsequent archaeological excavations in Greece and Asia Minor led to renewed interest in, and more profound understanding of, classic art and architecture.

Here then we have the fruits of Mr. Allen's long and laborious historical investigation. Faced with a huge mass of facts and theories from many varied sources, he has assimilated and marshalled them with deft skill. Not the least important part of his contribution is his attention throughout to the reflection in literature of the arguments for and against classicism, his generous and pertinent quotations from both well-known and obscure writers. Without ignoring the critical and interpretative side, he has naturally emphasized the expository and descriptive. In his eagerness to drive his points home he sometimes dwells on the obvious; at times his style is somewhat diffuse and repetitious. But these are relatively minor faults in a work of great value and suggestiveness.

Finally, a word should be said of the handsome format and typographical beauty of these two bountifully illustrated volumes.

by *Richard F. Jones*

JOHN DONNE'S UNIVERSE

JOHN DONNE AND THE NEW PHILOSOPHY. By Charles Monroe Coffin. Columbia University Press. New York, 1937. (Columbia University Studies in English and Comparative Literature, No. 126.)

At the outset, it may be said that this is an excellent book, characterized by sound scholarship, penetrating analysis, acute reasoning, and artistic insight. It does honor to the series in which it appears. Its purpose is a definitive estimate of the extent to which the new science, especially astronomy, influenced Donne's mind and colored his work. Toward this end Professor Coffin briefly considers the relationship of poetry and science with particular reference to Donne, briefly but clearly characterizes the old science and theology, gives an adequate survey of the rise of the new philosophy, scrutinizes Donne's poetry and prose for influence of this philosophy, and ends with a careful analysis of his temperament and mental attitudes. The difficulty of the problems encountered can hardly be overestimated, for Donne is not easily understood. There was plenty of flame in him, but also a considerable amount of smoke, and his passionate efforts to understand the meaning of experience and human personality frequently find expression in baffling imagery and in a style which, if not tortured, certainly moves outside the customary or anticipated.

Professor Coffin sees as the central problem of Donne's life the effort to discover the unity of body and soul, spirit, and matter, a synthesis which medieval philosophy had partly achieved, but which the new philosophy tended to destroy. The new science dissipated the security and assurance which the old fostered, and in the case of Donne supplied no new basis for them. "The new philosophy," says the poet, "calls all in doubt", words which aptly epitomize his attitude toward the progressive thought of his age. Professor Coffin shows beyond the shadow of a doubt his hero's familiarity with the work of such significant scientists as Gilbert, Kepler, and Galileo, but this familiarity produced no new faith,

but rather added to the confusion of a sceptical questioning mind, eager to find in its own experiences some method of reconciling the natures and demands of flesh and spirit. The only assistance which the new science afforded him was in the way of furnishing a new source of imagery, to be used for illustration, analogy, symbolism, and even proof of his intellectual and spiritual experiences, and for these purposes the old science served as well as the new. This latter fact shows how far short the poet fell of being converted to the new ideas of his time, for his images are not only figurative; as Professor Coffin says, he recognized "a subtle convergence of spirit and matter and their inherent interdependence," and at times he seems to infer that the laws of one are valid for the other, somewhat in the manner of Bacon's primary philosophy.

Donne was denied the comfort of a new vision of the universe, such as filled with an unquestioning enthusiasm a few Elizabethans like Thomas Digges and William Gilbert. He did not, however, cling tenaciously to the Ptolemaic system, as did most of his contemporaries, and especially the Oxford Dons, who turned a cold shoulder to Giordano Bruno's earnest espousal of the Copernican theory. His attitude seems somewhat like that of Robert Recorde and Thomas Hill, who could not bring themselves either to relinquish entirely their hold upon the old astronomy or effect a secure grasp on the new, but letting "I would not wait upon I would", maintained an almost comical indecision.

For the most part Donne missed the central idea of the new science, which had to do with independence of the ancients and faith in direct investigation of nature. Although of too original a nature to be circumscribed by the authority of antiquity, and although frequently a foe to the principle of authority in religious matters, he did not attack the specific authority of the ancients in science. His frequent quotations, even though introduced, as Professor Coffin says, to support his own ideas, do not reveal that repugnance to classical writers characteristic of the scientific movement. Even more significant is his silence regarding the necessity of experiment and observation. Though subjective experiences were the chief object of his thought, he did not realize, or at least he gives no evidence of realizing, the importance of sensuous experience in the discovery of natural truths. With

many of the discoveries of the new science he was familiar, but of the importance of the method which made these discoveries possible, a method which produced a new faith in the attainment of truth, he seems to have been entirely unaware. For this reason he manifests no consciousness of the possibility of the advancement of knowledge. Belief in progress, uncongenial with what at times seems to be his cynical scepticism, was not his. He looks backward rather than forward. Copernicus and others are innovators as much as discoverers. This fact is particularly evident in the attractiveness which the idea of the decay of nature appears to possess for him. Though he maintained a critical attitude toward it, as well he might in view of the controversy over the matter in his own day, it possessed a fascination for him that would hardly have been compatible to one who had caught the new vision of science. The reviewer does not think that he is contradicting Professor Coffin when he says that Donne, though painfully aware of some of the most important discoveries of his day, lies outside the scientific movement.

The reviewer has little desire to find fault with a book which makes such a distinct contribution to our knowledge of Donne, not only in its avowed purpose of definitively fixing the nature and extent of the influence of science upon him, but also in a general interpretation of the man. At times the author's conclusions rest upon the placing of emphasis and drawing of inferences, when a different emphasis and different inferences would produce somewhat different conclusions. Though a satisfactory account of the new ideas which struck upon Donne's mind is given, some benefit might have been gained from presenting him against the general background of the scientific movement in England. But these are suggestions rather than criticisms.

by William S. Knickerbocker

TOWARDS RENOVATING THACKERAY

THE SILVER FORK SCHOOL. Novels of Fashionable Life Preceding *Vanity Fair*.
By Matthew Whiting Rosa. New York: Columbia University Press. 1936.
Pp. 223.

Two or three years ago, Mr. Seán O'Faoláin dismissed Dickens as "the great comforter of the nineteenth century", and prophesied that as the nineteenth century recedes into history, "the more will [Dickens'] reputation decline and the higher will the reputation of Thackeray become." Thackeray, said the Irish novelist, "slapped smug English morality in the face. . . a little gentlemanly slap." In effect, Mr. O'Faoláin was echoing the opinion of the American critic, W. C. Brownell, who in 1899 asserted with characteristic neo-humanist finality that Thackeray "is already a classic. He is the representative English man of letters of his time, and one of the few great novelists of the world."

Unfortunately, for us who are confronted with the works of Meredith and Henry James—to limit ourselves to the consideration of Thackeray's achievement in the light of subsequent English fiction—Thackeray's blemishes and defects as a literary artist are perhaps too evident to permit assent to the opinions of O'Faoláin or Brownell. Henry James ignored Thackeray's performance as indifferent: Meredith recorded a judgment which is much closer to our notion: of Thackeray, Meredith said in *Diana of the Crossways*: "A great modern writer [Thackeray], of clearest eye and head, now departed, capable in activity of presenting thoughtful women, thinking men, groaned over his puppetry, that he dared not animate them, flesh though they were, with the fires of positive brain-stuff. He could have done it, and he is of the departed! Had he dared, he would (for he was Titan enough) have raised the Art [of the novel] in dignity on a level with History, to an interest surpassing the narrative of public deeds as vividly as man's heart and brain in their union excel his plain lines of action to eruption."

Yet without Thackeray one doubts if Meredith could have achieved his own successes. For Thackeray restored to the art of the Victorian novel the social spirit which was blurred in the multitudinous works about scoundrels and social climbers which followed Scott and Austen. Literature has its slums to which culturally-impoorished readers migrate as their sensibilities fade and their brains soften. Mrs. Anne Marsh, Mrs. Catherine Gore, Lady Charlotte Bury, Lady Morgan, and the Countess of Blessington created a Byronic world in fiction in which anaemic females were the pathetic victims of resolutely dissolute males. Feminized novelists like Bulwer-Lytton and Disraeli, whose tender souls were bewitched by this female Byronism, contributed to the *genre* with *Pelham* and *Vivian Grey*. Thackeray's early work in social and literary mockery was necessary to tidy the tradition which had been sissyized by maudlin males and females of flowing pens.

Thackeray was a consistent castigator of the pretense which Victorian prosperity produced and, after Carlyle, became the most out-spoken critic of his time. Thoroughly middle-class himself, he probed Victorian *bourgeois* society and, through the glass of fiction, exposed its social superficialities. He was not sufficiently strong-willed to withstand its retaliations when it dismissed him as a "satirist" and "cynic" but succumbed to its displeasure and altered his function from social criticism to social history. *Vanity Fair* marked the turning point of his career: combining social criticism with history. After basking in the pleasant airs of his beloved eighteenth century (in *English Humourists*, *Henry Esmond*, and *The Virginians*), he returned to the social depiction of the Victorian age in *The Newcomes* (that forerunner of George Eliot's *Middlemarch*) and *Philip*. The true clue to Thackeray lies in his own confession: "That under the mask satirical there walks about a sentimental gentleman who means not unkindly to any person." The Victorians who squirmed under his exposures revealed their superficiality when they saw him only as "satirist" and failed to see his more obvious naturalism. "The only way in which poor authors can act honestly for the public and themselves," he soliloquized in *Catherine*, "is to paint thieves as they are; not dandy, poetical, rose-water thieves, but real, downright, scoundrels, leading scoundrelly lives, drunken, dissolute, low, as scoundrels will be." He hated *sham*.

Thackeray is a delectable object of contemplation now, just because he *was* a mocker of sham, especially in its wicked and more immoral forms. Suffering as we today are from the brutalisms of Hemingway, Callaghan, and the rest of the hard-boiled school (our own fictionist idolaters of the hard-guy and brazen hussy), the effective skirmishes of Thackeray a century ago engage us in more than a merely historical interest. Thackeray mocked, in his earlier career, not Victorian manners and society so much as execrable taste in fiction. Ultimately, Thackeray must stand or fall on his qualities as an artist, but those qualities will become more manifest as his preliminary flourishes during his apprentice years are re-read.

Thackeray is the first great novelist to emerge from the peculiarly Victorian school of witty journalism. He began as a disciple of the school of Maginn and *Fraser's Magazine* in which he learned the jaunty, colloquial idiom of the Fraserians. Though persiflage was the stock-in-trade of that garrulous journal, its irresponsibility and irreverence of popular fetiches enabled it to alter contemporary sensibilities. With little to say, it said it verbosely, creating a hilarious, *good-natured* mood which Thackeray picked up and altered to make the vehicle of his own asides and soliloquies. What *Fraser's* began, *Punch* continued. *Punch's* bantering, facetious tone introduced something new in periodicals: its popularity provided both the opportunity and the taste for the expansion of Thackeray's urbane, mild satire. Without this initial and preliminary discipleship, it is impossible to conjecture what Thackeray's course would have been; but absorbing what these two influential magazines had to give, he added something peculiarly his own. In these overtures printed in *Fraser's* and *Punch*, he discovered himself and created his public by clever parodies of popular novels and novelists. He hit off tellingly the more obvious defects of that pushing time, exercising his irony and his verve by a gentle whimsicality which he sedulously cultivated until it flowered uniquely in his novels.

The final verdict on Thackeray is not yet at hand: but efforts like Mr. Rosa's *The Silver-Fork School* and Miss Thrall's *Rebellious Fraser's* greatly assist in clarifying one's mind and prepare one more adequately to gauge Thackeray's stature in his mature novels: *Vanity Fair*, *Pendennis*, *The Newcomes*, and *Henry Es-*

mond. Novelists of the "silver-fork school"—or fiction depicting fashionable life of the Victorian thirties and forties—were responsible for a gigantic and bulbous literary excrescence which threatened the solidity and significance of the English novel when he began his career. Today their only value—apart from their sociological and historical documentation of jaded taste and shocking morals—is the light they throw on Thackeray's art in its initial stages and upon his *Vanity Fair*. "Curiously enough," says Mr. Rosa, "Thackeray, who for many years, too many, indeed, attacked snobbery and burlesqued Disraeli, Bulwer, and Mrs. Gore, wrote the supreme fashionable novel. . . . *Vanity Fair* enlarges and restudies the entire world of the fashionable novelists. . . . and because this is true, a study of the fashionable novels will throw considerable light on Thackeray."

Although Mr. Rosa fails to provide a summarizing chapter on Thackeray, his occasional references to *Vanity Fair* determine his skilful selection and emphasis in moving among those verbose and flabby novels produced by the novelists of the "silver-fork school". With graceful mastery of his material, Mr. Rosa traces the rise of the school, indicates its major aspects, and, in a useful and illuminating chapter on its chief publisher, Henry Colburn, provides a convenient summary of a phase of literary history which much needed scholarly examination and statement. Suggestive as Mr. Rosa's treatment is, it leaves much to be desired: his entire work seems superficial and sketchy: its tone is somewhat too airy and disdainful towards his material for complete satisfaction, smacking too obviously of the dilettante. Perhaps his cavalier flippancy may be justified because he has no intention of reviving interest in novels of fashionable life of the Regency period for themselves alone. They are the humus from which the tree of Thackeray's fiction grew. Mr. Rosa succeeds in supplying a vivid sense of some of the literary *milieu* essential for the pressing task of renovating Thackeray for our own day.

by Charles Frederick Harrold

PORTRAITS FROM LIFE

PORTRAITS FROM LIFE. By Ford Madox Ford. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1937. Pp. 227. \$3.00.

"As for me I went on working beside Conrad, trying, when his passionate and possessive material, mental and physical vicissitudes left me the leisure, to evolve for myself a vernacular of an extreme quietness that would suggest someone of some refinement talking in a low voice near the ear of someone else he liked a good deal."

And that is precisely what Ford Madox Ford succeeded in evolving—a style so natural, so gentle, flexible yet vital, that one reads effortlessly, inclining one's head almost as if to catch the finest modulation of his voice. Thus these memories and criticisms of Henry James, Conrad, Hardy, Wells, Stephen Crane, D. H. Lawrence, Galsworthy, Turgenev, W. H. Hudson, Dreiser, and Swinburne have, all of them, a soft and winning quality which prevents one from putting down the book until the end. They are not criticisms so much as imaginative and personal evaluations, and, from another angle, evocations of scenes, personalities, and struggles and idealisms, which now recede more and more into the past as Mr. Ford remains almost the sole survivor of the group he discusses.

Throughout the volume we catch fascinating glimpses of Ford the creative artist in words: one does not soon forget his analysis of the style in Lawrence's first story submitted to the *English Review*, of which Ford was an editor (see pages 73-74 for a memorable passage by one stylist on the skill and beauty of another); nor does one forget that last chapter, in which the author assesses the late-Victorians, the Impressionists, and the later "explosive-mouthed gang of scarce-breeched filibusterers", the cohorts of Mr. Ezra Pound. Indeed the volume constitutes an eloquent *Vale!* to a past which, if not very distant in chronological time, is nevertheless rapidly becoming remote in terms of our inner sense of contemporaneity. Like so many of those whose childhood reaches

back into the Victorian age, Mr. Ford speaks reproachfully of the "nightmare" which the great "Middle Victorians" were to him, "surrounded by barrier after barrier of the Victorian Academic Great". And he asks, as has Mr. Wingfield-Stratford, whether or not the "bitter-hating age" of Victoria was not a logical preparation for our own chaotic times. "Wouldn't, I mean, Poison Gas be just the sort of thing that, could they have invented it, the Ruskins and Carlyles and Wilberforces and Holman Hunts would have employed on their enemies or their blood-brothers become rivals? . . . The dreadful thing about nineteenth-century Anglo-Saxondom was that it corrupted with its bitter comfort-plus-opulence mania not merely itself but the entire, earnest, listening world. What effect could a serious and continued reading of these fellows have had but 1914? . . . And 193. . ."

But these lugubrious musings are but a small part of a book that contains some of the finest reminiscences of the age of Conrad. And the reader who wishes to re-create for himself something of the atmosphere of that age, with its high ardors for the perfect phrase and the honest rendering of life, will do well to surrender to Mr. Ford's magic—and to the excellence of the eight portrait-photographs—and listen to his "low voice" speaking in that "vernacular of an extreme quietness" which weaves such a remarkable illusion of reality.

by Robert S. Hale

WORDS WITH MEANING

THE TYRANNY OF WORDS. By Stuart Chase. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1938.

In the olden days, kings employed court magicians whose duty it was to ascertain the true names of their enemies, and then to

destroy those enemies by means of incantations consisting entirely of words. Today, according to Stuart Chase, reformers and anti-reformers who constantly pursue the enemies of the State in order to destroy them by means of laws and decrees preserve the same faith in the power of dialectic symbols. The battle of words goes on. And out of this battle there now arises an entirely new science—the science of Semantics, which in time may be regarded as a method of inference for the study of knowledge in general.

The method itself had its inception with Einstein's analysis of what Newton meant by the words *length*, *time* and *space*, and Mr. Chase gives a very crisp account of the work that has followed. He begins with a look around at the mythology—or, as Thurlow Arnold calls it, the “folklore”—which surrounds such words as capitalism, communism, consumer and producer, and then takes up the use of words by primitive peoples, pioneers, scientists, mathematicians, philosophers, logicians, economists on the right, economists on the left, judges, and lawyers, in each case with amusing and illuminating examples.

To protect himself at the outset against the danger which must inevitably confront any militant proponent of semantics—namely, the danger of being stabbed with his own sword—Mr. Chase says in defense of his own writing: “More serious are the pits into which I am bound to fall because of the persistence and strength of language habits which are not so much mine as a common racial heritage. As I write I shall identify word with thing, I shall confuse levels of abstraction. I shall personify absolutes. I shall deal in varieties of word magic. Edit and revise as I may, many of these lapses will remain. But you are going to read a book where the author is at least on the watch for failures of meaning.”

Such is the formidable barricade which Mr. Chase sets up as a safeguard against his own transgressions in the use of symbols. The story is told of Sir Arthur Eddington how once, when confronted by a critic who complained that he had used the word “space” with five different meanings, he defended himself by replying that since the critic had understood the meanings in each of the five different instances then not much harm could have been done. Similarly, in reviewing *The Tyranny of Words*, it would be absurd to deny that even where Mr. Chase has intentionally

used his words loosely in the form of metaphor or suggestion the author's meaning is clear and unmistakable.

However, one does feel that Mr. Chase, without in any way impairing the readability of his work, might have included a few more constructive examples of the semantic, or operational, method of analysis. Most of the examples of slovenly dialectic which he sees fit to include are obvious at first glance, and hardly suitable for corrective purposes. He begins his list, in the appendix, with one of his own speeches, written several years ago. After analyzing it and exposing his tyrannical application of word symbols, he proceeds further and finds that even today he would be at a loss to express precisely what he did mean. When he finally arrives at something constructive, he breaks off by asking himself; "Now, Mr. Chase, if that was what you meant in 1933, when you made that speech, why didn't you say so."

Mr. Chase is an accountant and undoubtedly a very good one. One cannot help feeling that if he had taken some of the accountant's words—such as the *costs* and *prices* of the *commodities* which the government is proposing to regulate—and shown how to apply the semantic, or operational, method to determine what the accountants mean by those words, and what Mr. Roosevelt means by those words, he would have added greatly to the stature and importance of the book.

Perhaps Mr. Chase has already done so among his friends and fellow accountants. And if he has done so, doubtless he has found confirmed the prediction which Bridgman makes in the *Logic of Modern Physics*: the book which Mr. Chase considers the clearest statement yet produced of how a scientist today should attempt to order his intellectual equipment.

"Operational thinking," writes Bridgman, "will at first prove to be an unsocial virtue. One will find oneself perpetually unable to understand the simplest conversation of one's friends, and will make oneself universally unpopular by demanding the meaning of apparently the simplest terms of every argument. Possibly after one has schooled himself to this better way, there will remain a permanently unsocial tendency, because doubtless much of our present conversation will then become unnecessary. The socially optimistic may venture to hope, however, that the ultimate effect will be to release one's energy for more interesting exchange of ideas.

Not only will operational thinking reform the social art of conversation, but all our social relations will be liable to reform. Let any one define, in operational terms, any popular present day discussion of religious or moral issues if he wishes to realize the magnitude of the reformation awaiting us! Whenever we temporize or compromise in applying our theories of conduct to practical life, we may suspect a failure of operational thinking."

If only for the reflected light it throws upon the more provocative works of Bridgman, Carnap, Stefansson and others from across the Atlantic, Mr. Chase's examination is well worth reading.

THERE is but one way to save civilization from destruction: we must prepare in advance to adjust ourselves to future spiritual needs, sympathetically and with an open mind. Moreover, every conservative-minded person today, that is, anyone anxious to avoid a catastrophe and hoping for reason, change, and progress, far from encouraging the obstinacy of stupidity by a whit, must on the other hand adopt a rather revolutionary attitude to himself. He must, indeed, be ready to deny the existing but out-of-date conventions on a broad scale, and rather to accept the reproach of radicalism than to help widen the difference between the material world and the world of the spirit, a difference fraught with disaster.

—THOMAS MANN

Sewanee Review

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